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OCTOBER 29, 1935 15c

CAPITALISM CANNOT DEMOBILIZE
y John Strachey

THE GALLUP
VERDICT
An Editorial

The Explosion in the A. F. of L.

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New Masses

OCTOBER 29, 1935

"Ready to Give His Life—"

"THERE can be no greater honor than fighting for the freedom of the Negro people and for the freedom of the working class. If they should decide to take my life for doing this—let them know that I would rather die fighting for what belongs to me and my class than sit idly by while they trample my people underfoot. I prefer death—if I am not given my freedom." Four days before he went back to Georgia to start serving his murderous sentence of eighteen to twenty years on the chain gang, Angelo Herndon spoke these words. Those who heard them will never forget that heroic Negro boy—tall, straight, proud—standing before them, determined and unafraid. On October 24 Angelo Herndon was to surrender to the authorities of Georgia. In January, 1933, they demanded his death, because he led one thousand hungry people, Negro and white together, to the county commissioners to ask for bread; because he had in his possession literature which spoke of self-determination for the Negro people in the Black Belt of the South; because they said, possession of this literature was proof that Angelo Herndon was working to overthrow the constituted authority of the State of Georgia and set up in its place a "Black Republic." The jury listened to the frenzied demand for his life presented by the prosecution. They recommended "mercy"—18 to 20 years on the Georgia chain-gang. Because Angelo Herndon organized the hungry, because Angelo Herndon read and thought, because Angelo Herndon was courageous enough to fight for what he believed in—flinging into the teeth of the lily-white jury—"You can do what you will with Angelo Herndon, but you cannot kill the working class—" Angelo Herndon was sentenced to a living death.

RETREAT FROM NEW YORK — *Boris Gorelick*

THE State Supreme Court upheld the verdict. The United States Supreme Court twice refused to review it—and now Angelo Herndon is back in the hands of the Georgia lynchers. The International Labor Defense which conducted his case from the lowest to the highest courts, which raised the $15,000 cash bail that won his freedom for a year and three months—has not yet accepted this verdict as final. Neither have the scores of organizations, political parties, trade unions and Negro groups which have forged a powerful united front of defense to save Angelo Herndon. Governor Talmadge now has the power to free Angelo Herndon. Two million signatures are now being gathered demanding that he exercise this power, not only to free Angelo Herndon and the eighteen other men and women whose fate hangs in the same balance that holds Angelo Herndon's, but also that he abolish the vicious, unconstitutional slave law under which they were all indicted. The campaign to collect these 2,000,000 signatures on a petition addressed to Governor Talmadge has almost reached the half-way mark. (Petition blanks can be secured from the Herndon Petition Committee, Room 610, 80 East 11th St., N.Y.C.) Time is of the greatest importance. Every day that passes means another day for Angelo Herndon on the Georgia chain-gang. Signatures, telegrams, letters to the governor

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demanding Herndon's freedom—funds to the I.L.D. to carry on the fight—these are little enough to ask in the face of what Angelo Herndon faces. He is ready to give his life. Those of us who believe in justice, freedom and human rights must give him our support.

Youth Program Bankrupt

ON JUNE 26 President Roosevelt signed an executive order, creating the National Youth Administration. In doing so, he stated: "I have determined that we shall do something for the nation's unemployed youth because we can ill afford to lose the skill and energy of these young men and women. They must have their chance in school, their turn as apprentices and their opportunity for jobs—a chance to work and earn for themselves." But that was four months ago. Now that the sound of the grand speeches about saving the youth of America has become slightly monotonous, we have an opportunity to judge the progress made by the administration, in solving the youth problem. On October 16, Aubrey Williams, executive director of the National Youth Administration spoke before the Welfare Council of New York City, in the Astor Hotel. What has the National Youth Administration accomplished, in addition to raising hopes that American youth would get jobs and a chance for education? Mr. Williams made a confession, not a speech.

"THE magnitude of the National Youth Administration's task," he said, "is quite overwhelming. It is estimated that from 5,000,000 to 8,000,000 young people between the ages of 16 and 25 are wholly unoccupied. They are neither working nor attending school. Almost 3,000,000 young people are on relief. Seven hundred thousand young people had to quit school last year before they had finished high school. And last June hundreds of thousands of them graduated from school and college into a labor market that was greatly surfeited. It is a cold, unwelcoming world that our young people are entering. I feel strongly that *society as presently organized is permanently* denying all opportunities to large groups of these people. To speak of equal opportunities for all is ridiculous. Those who have been born poor will probably remain poor. Those young people who have been unfortunate enough to come of age during the depression will be permanently handicapped. The opportunities for advancement of the poor youth and the rich youth are by no means equal." In this address alone, all the illusions concerning the National Youth Administration are blasted sky-high. Not only does the head of Roosevelt's youth agency confess the inability of the N.Y.A. to answer the needs of youth, but he openly declares that capitalism will permanently degrade the status of America's young generation.

COMING as this speech does, on the eve of the eighteenth anniversary of the Russian revolution, we are immediately drawn to a comparison of the status of youth under socialism and under capitalism. With the beginning of the new school year in Moscow, 72 new schools were opened and more than 300 were opened throughout the Soviet Union. There is no unemployment for the young man or woman in the U.S.S.R. In the speeches of the young graduates from the Soviet schools at the end of the last semester, the note which was struck continually reiterated the fact that all doors were open to the youth of the Soviet Union, that the engineering, medical, teaching and every profession and trade required the services of more and more young people. Mr. Williams is perplexed. He sees no way out for the youth of America. But ever larger numbers of American youth have shown that they will struggle against the degradation of their generation. Youth work relief, vocational training and educational opportunities can be provided for the youth, even under present conditions in the United States. The American Youth Congress which represents 1,350,000 young people has drawn up a bill, the American Youth Act, which does provide for the setting of a democratically-administered youth bureau which will secure job relief and student aid for the millions who are now in need. This bill has won support from many trade unions, from Congressman Marcantonio, the National Council of Methodist Youth and many other youth organizations. Now, as never before, is it necessary to speed the campaign to make this bill a law.

The Communists' Campaign

WHEN Herman Woskow, Socialist candidate for assemblyman in New York City, openly urged the United Front, the Communist Party offered to withdraw its candidate in favor of the Socialist nominee. This move toward consolidating the votes of anti-fascists and strengthening the people's front is a concrete example of the Communist Party stand on the united front program. In other sections of the city the Communist campaign gathers momentum. Before the Board of Estimate, Carl Brodsky, Communist candidate for alderman, outlined the Party platform. Brodsky objected to paying huge sums to bankers for "debt service"—one-third of the city's budget is dispersed in interest and principal payments to large banking concerns while over a million and a half unemployed suffer from inadequate relief. Moreover, there is no provision in the budget for the restoration of civil-service pay cuts. Brodsky advocated an increase in appropriations for schools and education, for sanitation and hospital services, for old-age pensions. These increases can be met by the elimination of county offices which amount to sinecures; by repassing the city inheritance tax, by a stock transfer tax, by lowering the salaries of elected or appointed city officials who receive more than $7,500 annually and by cutting aldermanic salaries; by declaring a moratorium on debt service for the duration of the depression; by raising the public-utility tax to 3 percent—all measures which the Democratic and Republican bosses would fight to the death.

THE realistic program of the Communist Party is designed to alleviate the misery of the unemployed and the oppression of workers. The Citizens' Union of the City of New York has endorsed Clarence Hathaway, candidate for mayor, as "an able writer and speaker whose personal qualifications measure up to the standards required for this office." This is the first time that the Citizens' Union has endorsed a Communist running for office and shows the growing power of the Party. Moreover, liberals and united front advocates such as Heywood Broun, President of the American Newspaper Guild, have openly supported the Communist platform. This recognition is based on the realization that the Communist program is the best implement to fight fascism, the best implement with which to check the drive against the working class and the middle class—whether these are skilled or unskilled workers, unemployed,

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white-collar groups or small artisans and shopkeepers.

The Fight in Harlem

IN AN effort to help defeat the seventeen locked-out employes of The Amsterdam News, William Pickens, field secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, has released a statement virtually denying the right of organization to Negroes employed by other Negroes. Mrs. Sadie Warren Davis, the publisher who locked out her editorial staff for membership in the American Newspaper Guild, also subscribes to this theory of exceptionalism. But she uses the same methods against her employes that white employers use against white workers; last week she raised the Red scare in a front page editorial in which she called the Guild "an outlaw dues-collecting organization . . . a racket." That same day she caused the arrest of nine pickets, including Joseph North and Loren Miller of THE NEW MASSES. Shortly after the arrest, Heywood Broun, national president of the Guild, appeared to lead another mass picket line but no arrests followed. The answer of The Amsterdam News employes to these efforts to defeat them has been a redoubling of efforts to enlist community support in Harlem. There has been a decline in the paper's circulation and some of the largest stores have withdrawn their advertisements. The New York Guild, which is backing the employes with its full resources, is appealing for support in an effort to register a decisive victory in this history-making labor struggle.

Relief Workers in Action

THE Emergency Relief Board of New York City rides the horns of a dilemma that permits of no escape. On the Right are the Board of Estimate, which long ago betrayed relief in favor of debt service on the Sinking Fund, and the State T.E.R.A. which furnishes 75 percent of the money for the city's relief load. These have already given the command to fire 10 percent of the workers in New York's public relief agencies by November 1. But on the Left, equally determined, stand the solid ranks of 7,000 members of the Association of Workers in Public Relief Agencies, demanding justice for themselves and for the city's unemployed. "If you force us to meet you on the economic front," Congressman Vito Marcantonio, spokesman for the mass delegation of the A.W.P.R.A. told the Board at last Monday's open hearing, "we shall meet you on the picket line."

THE Board has unequivocally shown its distaste for picket lines. It was the threat of mass protest by thousands of organized social-welfare workers that forced them to take half a step backward and grant an open hearing to the united front of the workers and representatives of the city's unemployed before the firing started. Whether they will complete that step after "deliberating" the demands placed before them at the open hearing, it is too early to say. The union has several victories to its credit. Strike sentiment runs high throughout the thirty-odd precincts of New York's public relief setup. On the day of the hearing, work stopped in ten of the precincts, called by locals acting on their own, a spontaneous show of enthusiastic support for the militant leadership of the union. The workers are demanding that the Board withhold dismissals until the relief situation can be studied by a joint committee of the Board and the A.W.P.R.A. and a decision reached on what constitutes a staff adequate to the needs of New York's 120,000 families on relief. They ask further that, in the event workers are to be dismissed, they be provided for under W.P.A. without subjecting them to the pauper's oath.

Book Union for November

THE November selection of the Book Union is *Stalin, A New World Seen Through One Man,* by Henri Barbusse. It is the last book from the hand of the great French writer and was finished just before he died. That Barbusse, who has played so great a part in the development of the People's Front in France and the United Front throughout the world should have chosen the biography of Stalin as his subject, indicates how important he felt a knowledge of the great Soviet leader to be. An understanding of the policy of Stalin in regard to international peace and the role the Soviet Union has played under his guidance for the preservation of international peace, is obviously of the greatest importance. The Book Union is to be congratulated for bringing before its growing audience a book of such immediate value. Following upon its first selection, *Proletarian Literature in America,* an anthology of the best recent writing in the field, the Book Union indicates that it conceives its function of a workers' book club in the broadest terms. Its membership grows and its future seems assured.

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WILLIAM BROWDER, *Business Manager*

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The World This Week

STANLEY BALDWIN, Premier of Great Britain, has a habit of letting the cat out of the bag. To say that Britain seeks to overthrow Mussolini is, in Baldwin's own words, "a lie of a dangerous kind." Great Britain's aim, as John Strachey has pointed out, is to preserve her own imperialist interests without allowing Mussolini to annex any territory Britain does not want him to annex: in other words, to preserve the status quo.

French imperialism has the same aim and in the last week the contradictions between the French and British points of view have become startlingly clear. British diplomacy has always jockeyed for the position of arbitrator in world disputes: it is this role that best allows England to act in a way that will assure the most favorable settlement —for Great Britain. Hence, England is chary of commitments that will prove too binding in the future. France, on the other hand, fears the menace of German rivalry more than any other single factor. French diplomatic strategy is based on a series of balances designed to check German growth. The present Italian adventure in Ethiopia endangers France chiefly because it diverts the attention and energy of other European powers away from the situation in central Europe and allows Germany something of a free hand. Therefore, when the British seek support in the exercise of sanctions against Italy (to check the danger to English imperialist interests in Africa and Asia), France counters with a request for assurances that in the future Great Britain will back any move by France to suppress territorial and administrative upsets in central Europe. The bargaining reveals that neither country is too concerned with the fate of Ethiopia.

For there is no doubt that Ethiopia is in danger of being "befriended" by the League to the point of partition. Sanctions now outlined by the League (aside from the U.S.S.R. and some of the smaller states) will have little effect on Italy. It is clear that financial boycott is meaningless inasmuch as Italian credit is so bad that for the last months all Italian purchases had to be covered by cash. Embargoes on basic commodities are as yet only tentative. The refusal of Hungary and Albania, the unwillingness of Austria, to tie themselves to League decisions allow Italy to do a bang-up business with these countries and by their contiguity to Nazi Germany leave the corridor open for imports. The cost of sanctions to small nations may well make such measures unenforcable. Only the Soviet Union, of all the League states, insists that sanctions be all-embracing and that measures be taken to force the recalcitrant states into line. But then only the Soviet Union is completely opposed to imperialist war and wholeheartedly anxious to prevent Italian fascism from swallowing the independent nation of Ethiopia.

In this situation, each imperialist nation is determined to benefit at the expense of the others. England clearly stands behind the monarchist coup in Greece—because England needs further naval bases in the Mediterranean. Italy has undoubtedly lent support to Austria's von Starhemberg who in ousting Major Fey has succeeded in consolidating power in the hands of the army controlled by the fascists and sympathetic to Mussolini. The further centralization of Austrian fascism worries France which is most anxious to prevent any re-shuffling of forces in middle Europe. A fascist putsch threatens the remnants of democratic rights in Spain; Roumania and Bulgaria are open fascist dictatorships that are by no means stable; the minorities of Jugoslavia groan under the tyrannical oppression of the ruling fascist clique; friction between Poland and Czechoslovakia becomes daily more ominous.

And in Nazi Germany, the contradictions in Europe are most diligently utilized to forward German ambitions. Let the other imperialists worry about Ethiopia and Africa. German fascism wants colonies too; since Africa is closed to its penetration, the Nazis look toward the east. With Poland in tow, Germany quarrels with Lithuania over Memel; once Memel is annexed, it is easy to attack the Soviet Union. If the other powers get too involved in their own ambitions, Hitler Germany can expect little interference; then on to Memel, on to the Ukraine. Certainly, no other imperialist nation would object to Germany taking a chunk of Soviet territory. No capitalist power wishes the U.S.S.R. well.

In the Far East, Japan has already put out feelers. It is elaborately picking a quarrel with the government of Outer Mongolia—friendly to the Soviet Union. It is threatening to make China another Manchukuo — a Japanese province. It is zealous in promoting border incidents with the Soviet Union. The time, Japan makes clear, is not far off for an invasion of Siberia. Germany will probably attack simultaneously from the West. Imperialist differences can be submerged in a raid on the U.S.S.R.

But England and the United States fear Japan's growth. Hence the temporary cooperation of the two nations in the Orient: last week, American gunboats defended British interests at Swatow against Japan. The United States is by no means an exception to present-day trends. Peace, the Soviet Union has reiterated time and again, is indivisible. The United States government, by "neutrality" legislation and pious speeches dealing with private passengers traveling on belligerents' boats, cannot hope to avoid being drawn into a world conflict. Only the workers and their allies here, as in the rest of the world can prevent the invasion of the Soviet Union which will be the signal for the world offensive against the working class.

The Soviet Union is prepared. By utilizing capitalist contradictions it has prevented invasion and a general world explosion so far. The growing working-class movement, the United Front in the remainder of the world has acted as a brake to the imperialist ambitions of the great powers. And there is the dread in the minds of all imperialists that war will precipitate the revolt of the oppressed in all countries, that revolution will sweep Germany, Italy, Japan, central Europe.

Revolution is contagious; it is this danger that most terrifies the imperialist powers even as they press toward war. It is this contradiction of capitalism that must be utilized by the world proletariat as a weapon against the invasion of the Soviet Union, as a weapon against the drive of the ruling class throughout the world toward fascism and war.

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The Gallup Verdict

AT AZTEC, NEW MEXICO, in an atmosphere only too literally electric (the jail there was surrounded by charged electric wires) three coal miners of Gallup were convicted of second-degree murder for the death of Sheriff M. R. Carmichael. All known facts pointed to Carmichael's having been shot by his own deputies when they became panicky and fired into a crowd. No worker dead or alive was found with a gun. No connection was ever established between any defendant and the two bullets that killed Carmichael. Yet three men face jail terms of *forty-five to sixty years apiece*. Of the seven acquitted of the murder charge, five have been selected for deportation and two for trial on a charge of aiding a prisoner to escape. And the five who are to be deported will of course not be in New Mexico to testify at a new trial of the three convicted, in the event such a trial takes place.

The judge acted in a particularly "impartial" manner. "I understand that all or part of the defendants are Communists," he remarked as he passed sentence. "I hope that no future governors will release you." And to this he added, "If the jury had not recommended clemency, I would have given you the maximum penalty." As it was he merely handed out sentences of from forty-five to sixty years. The men are about thirty years of age—the distinction between the sentences given and life imprisonment is one that only a coal company judge would appreciate.

Their defense was obstructed by every power in the hands of the coal barons, by close collaboration between the present sheriff, D. W. Roberts and his gang of deputized thugs, McKinley County officials, the "New Deal" state of government of New Mexico and the federal Department of Labor (through its immigration officials). Nor can the effective aid of violent vigilantes who have maintained a state of terror in Gallup down to the present time be overlooked.

Adequate investigation and preparation of the defense's case was made impossible. Some witnesses were hastily deported. One is now insane as a result of a pistol-butt blow on the head during the first hysterical roundup of trade-unionists. Others were repeatedly threatened with tar and feathers in the best Santa Rosa tradition.

During the preliminary investigation, armed drunken thugs (one of whom now is an honored member of Gallup's police force in recognition of services rendered) threatened defense attorneys, ordered them out of town. The sheriff himself demanded that Attorney Charles Lynch leave town; the treatment of Robert Minor and David Levinson when kidnaped by vigilantes is too well known to need retelling.

Mass-defense activity was stifled in Gallup by the simple expedient of tearing up the United States constitution and forbidding workers' meetings altogether. Mail between Gallup and Sante Fe was repeatedly "lost," necessitating circuitous and expensive methods of communications. And not to be outdone, the trial judge, James B. McGhee forbade the defense to publicize the facts of the case in New Mexico, although the commercial press beat him to it by systematically suppressing and distorting the truth. During the trial, one man was arrested and held on $5,000 bail and warrants were issued for a dozen more for distributing leaflets giving a simple outline of the case. The Daily Worker reporter was threatened with arrest; a writer for The Nation was one day excluded from the courtroom.

Aztec is a tiny village of 800 in an isolated farming county, miles from a railroad, with no daily newspaper. The town's vigilante organization, the United American Patriots (headquarters in Atlanta, Ga.), boasts of 200 members in Gallup and declared that it "works in cooperation with our Department of Justice, with the Immigration Department, and in cooperation with the intelligence service. We maintain our own secret service as well." Yet Judge McGhee refused three times to change the place of trial to Santa Fe where, by their own admission, the United American Patriots have no organization.

But the most serious obstacle to a proper defense was lack of funds. From the very start of the case, the capitalist press, egged on by the coal bosses, treated appeals for funds as a "racket" by "Reds" to enrich themselves. This cry was echoed by Nicholas Fontecchio, ex-priest, labor faker, who used his position as organizer to tear down rather than build the United Mine Workers of America in Gallup and who forbade the unionists of Gallup even to mention the defense of their union brothers in their locals! Needless to say, U.M.W.A. locals repudiated Fontecchio and supported the defense, but the delay and recrimination helped the prosecution.

And now there must be costly appeals—to save the three sentenced to life terms, to prevent them from sharing the fate of Tom Mooney for the activity in the labor movement; to prevent the conviction of two miners on the trumped-up charge of "aiding a prisoner to escape." The number of defendants and witnesses, the seriousness of the charges, the need for the best available counsel, the abject poverty of the defendants' families and of the native New Mexicans in general, the terror in Gallup which means that the defense activities must be centered in Sante Fe, 230 miles away, the complications due to threatened deportation of witnesses, the lack of accommodations in Aztec which entails taking quarters in another town: all this and much more means a strain on the resources of the defense committee in Sante Fe—the defense committee of A. F. of L. unions, liberal and worker organizations, the American Civil Liberties Union acting in conjunction with the International Labor Defense.

The trial consumed more than two weeks. Two of the defense attorneys journeyed from New York, members of the firm of William J. Donovan. They charged no fee, but their expenses for travel and communication were heavy. THE NEW MASSES considers this case so vital in the fight against fascism that it urges its readers and friends to lend their support. Contributions should be sent to the Gallup Defense Fund, THE NEW MASSES, 31 East 27th Street, New York City. The Gallup miners have done their share by leading the struggle against wage cuts and starvation. It is up to every sincere anti-fascist to fight for them, to come to their defense now that they face life-terms in prison. The Gallup miners must be freed!

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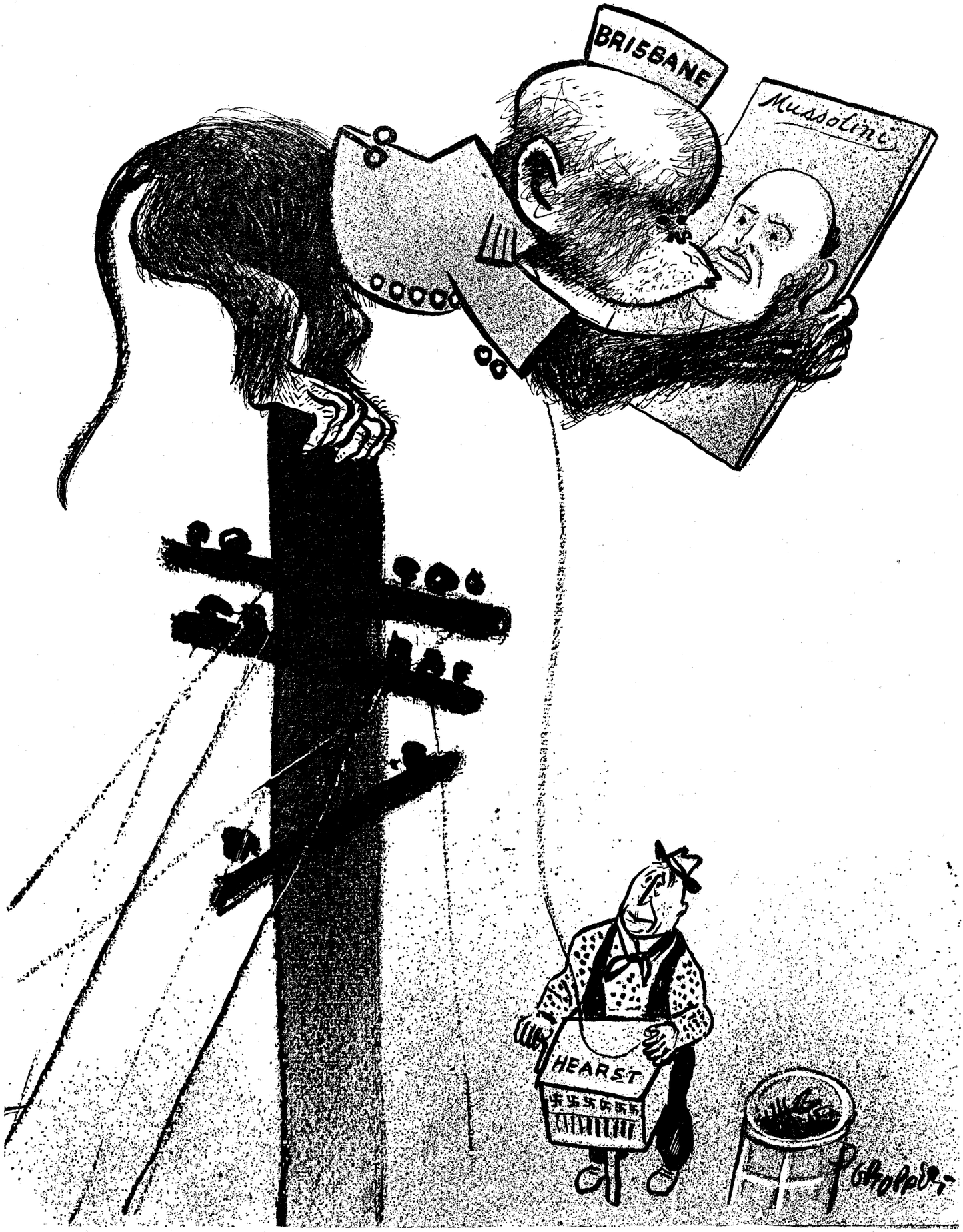

"OUR HERO"

William Gropper

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Capitalism Cannot Demobilize

Why Balbo Won't Seize Power in Italy

JOHN STRACHEY

LONDON, October 21.

THE British Government has drawn blank. Captain Anthony Eden, Secretary for League of Nations Affairs, proposes October 31 as the date on which to settle the date on which sanctions are to come into operation.

So much for the fears of those who thought that the Communists were in danger of "supporting the government in the imposition of sanctions." The truth is and always has been that if there is to be any hope of the League playing any part in stopping Mussolini every ounce of working-class pressure upon the British government and every other capitalist government will be necessary.

This is what makes the recent Labor Party policy of supporting the government because they thought that it was determined to uphold the League so disastrous. It is only just over a month ago that The Daily Herald was saying that "irrespective of party, irrespective of domestic conflicts, the overwhelming majority of the nation is firmly behind the government in the stand that it has taken in this issue" (leading article, September 12). But the British government had not taken a stand on behalf of the League of Nations and it was a hundred miles from acting "irrespective of party or domestic conflicts." On the contrary, the national government was giving some tentative support to the idea of League action partly as a method of protecting its own imperialist interests, but mainly, as must now be clear even to The Daily Herald, precisely in order to trap the Labor Party as a preparation for "domestic conflict" with it. And head over heels the Labor Party leaders fell into the trap. Up they rushed to place themselves "firmly behind" the government's non-existent stand for peace.

It is true that the British government is perfectly sincere in wanting to prevent Mussolini from taking all Ethiopia—they are determined to have some for themselves. They may be and in the opinion of many well-informed observers probably are ready to fight an Anglo-Italian war if Mussolini proves unaccommodating, but here they are in a difficulty. They want to injure Mussolini, to weaken him, to compel him to obey them. But they want to do so without overthrowing him, for what might follow the fall of Mussolini? A spectre is still haunting Europe—and it is the same spectre —Communism.

At the back of everything else is the British government's fear of producing Communism in Italy. In that connection an interesting rumor is going round London. Balbo, the Italian ex-minister and ex-the-most-powerful-man-in - Italy-after - Mussolini, was banished to the governorship of the Italian colony of Libya a few years back. Balbo visited France some weeks ago "to study French commercial aviation." While he was there the French government, foreseeing the trouble which Mussolini's Ethiopian adventure would cause them, but pledged to the hilt to support him, happened to ask Balbo if he thought he would be able to overthrow Mussolini and take power himself on a program of calling off the African war. Balbo replied that that was quite possible. The war was intensely unpopular with the entire Italian people. If he appeared in Italy and gave out that Mussolini was leading the nation to destruction he could, he thought, do the trick. Of course he must have suitable financial support from the French government; but he did not think that the price would be unduly high.

The French government began to feel that business might well result from the little talk, but Balbo, who evidently thinks ahead, continued thus: It would be possible (and not too expensive) for him to upset Mussolini and take power on the basis of calling off war and demobilizing the Italian army, but what was he to do next? If he called off the war and demobilized the Italian army and air force and stopped the feverish armaments production, he would create between six and seven million unemployed in Italy and what was he going to do with them? Unless he at any rate fed them he would lose power in a working-class revolution as quickly as he had gained it. And feed them he could not, for Mussolini had cleared almost the last lira out of the Italian treasury.

It was useless for him to take power in circumstances which would mean that he would lose it again in a few months. He was only willing to do the job for the French on one condition—*that the French government would give him the money to feed at least six million Italian unemployed for an indefinite period.* If the French government would do that, then he was their man, but not otherwise.

It is said that the negotiation actually got to the point of the French treasury experts working out the cost of feeding six million Italian unemployed forever. But of course they found the thing utterly impossible.

That is the story which is going about. Nothing would be more rash than to assume that it was true—except perhaps to assume that it was necessarily untrue. (Experience shows that these rumors are very seldom quite true, but equally seldom have no foundation in fact.) In any case the mere fact that such things are being said in the foreign offices, the chancelleries and after the press conferences is significant. It shows several things. It shows the amount of confidence there is in the mutual loyalties of the fascist leaders. (In this connection the report in today's British Daily Worker of Balbo's unwillingness to send his troop back from Libya is worth noting.) And above all it reveals the basic dilemma of the fascist-capitalist states today.

For whether Balbo said all this to the French government or not, the basic dilemma of fascist capitalism today is precisely this: *fascist capitalism cannot demobilize.* The fascist--capitalist state is one vast war-making machine. It can only exist by preparing for war. It can only hold the minds of its dupes among the population by ceaseless war propaganda. It can only hold its rotten economic system together by ever-increasing armament building. Finally there comes the stage which Mussolini reached. Then the mobilization of millions of men becomes an economic and social necessity. Once that moment has come the fascists must have war and no one can call that war off without destroying the fascist regime.

Capitalism in its ultimate fascist stage cannot demobilize. It must plunge on over mountains of human bodies to its destruction. The other capitalist governments such as those of Britain and France, which have not yet got to this stage, half-understand this. Thus even though the war-making fascists are injuring them, they are half-afraid to strike back, for today every capitalist empire, whether fascist or not, is at one and the same time a deadly rival to every other and an ally of every other, for they each and all face not only each other but the peril of internal collapse and revolution, which if it starts anywhere may spread everywhere. They are like two weakened boxers tottering in a final clinch. They still strike at each other, but fear nothing more than the collapse of their antagonist, lest they fall with him.

These dispatches by John Strachey are appearing weekly in THE NEW MASSES.

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Are Jews Communists?

JAMES WATERMAN WISE

JEWS are not Communists, is the burden of a panic-stricken statement issued jointly by Dr. Cyrus Adler, president of the American Jewish Committee, Alfred M. Cohen, president of the B'nai B'rith, and B. C. Vladeck, chairman of the Jewish Labor Committee. Purporting to answer Hitler's most recent anti-Semitic decrees and appealing to "the American sense of justice and fair play," these gentlemen hysterically deny that Communism is Jewish and frenziedly repudiate Jews who are Communists. Their statement, concocted out of fear for themselves, libels against Soviet Russia and lies about the Jewish people, is nothing less than an offer of their services to the fascists of America in return for personal immunity and private safety.

Behind such high-flown phrases as "that complete and unequivocal loyalty to the country of one's citizenship is a basic principle of Jewish life," lies a poorly-veiled invitation to potential Nazis of America to coordinate and pogromize Jews who will not accept the American Liberty League and the Chamber of Commerce as the architects of America's future. Like the handful of Jewish bankers in Germany, who, despite exile, anguish and annihilation of the masses of German Jewry, have "noticed nothing untoward since the advent of Hitler," these gentlemen are seeking to barter their people's security and honor for a mess of fascist pottage.

Let us analyze their statement. Discounting the introductory reproof of Hitlerism and the concluding panegyric of themselves, it falls into two parts. The first attempts to show that the Jews of Germany and of other countries were not and are not Communists; the second, that Communism and the Soviet Union are themselves foes of Jews and Judaism. As to the facts and figures—investigation will disprove the proud boast that Jews have played no part in Communist parties of various countries. This article must go to press too immediately to make possible the correction of each statistical misstatement, but refutation of a single paragraph will indicate the falsity of its entire structure.

Of Soviet Russia, it says: "Among the thirty-six commissars who constitute the Soviet government, only two are Jews. Neither the president of the Council of Commissars, Rykov; the president of the U.S.S.R., Kalinin; the general secretary of the Communist Party, Stalin; the president of the Third International, Dimitrov; nor the founder of the Communist Party, Lenin, are Jews." Not a word of the many and major figures who since 1917 have helped direct the policies and shape the course of the Soviet Union! Is it possible that the heads of the American Jewish Committee, the B'nai B'rith and Jewish Labor Committee have never heard of Litvinov, of Yaraslovsky, of Kaganovitch, of Radek, of Bela Kun? Or do they hope to confound the fascist lie that all Communists are Jews by the equally preposterous lie that no Communists are Jews?

But this juggling of names and figures is insignificant compared to the deliberate falsification concerning the status of Russian Jewry and the attitude of the Soviet government toward its Jewish population. Consider the following incredible assertion: "After the revolution the Soviet government declared fully half of the total Jewish population in Russia as declassed." What baser perversion of truth could Hitler himself have fashioned? What fouler libel could be devised by Goebbels' Angriff or Streicher's Stuermer?

The facts are too well-known—even to the gentlemen who have issued this statement—to be rehearsed. They include the black slavery in which Russian Jewry sorrowed and suffered under the Czars. They include the swift and unconditional Jewish emancipation which was among the first acts of the Bolshevik Party when it came into power. They include a systematic and unremitting campaign against anti-semitism throughout the length and breadth of the Soviet Union, which has today made Russia freer of the virus of Jew-hatred than any nation in the world. They include the colossal achievement of the Soviet government in rehabilitating economically, politically and socially the declassed Jews to whom these gentlemen refer. Let Messrs. Adler and Cohen and Vladeck consult the files of their own organizations. Let them refer to the work of the Ort and the Agrojoint and the Joint Distribution Committee. Let them make public the facts as to hundreds of thousands of Jews living in agricultural colonies in the Crimea and the Ukraine, and the even larger numbers who are sharing in the industrial development of Soviet Russia. Then let them dare speak of "declassed Jews" and "hindrances to the development of the Revolution."

EVEN more dangerous than these half-truths and untruths are the implications and the insinuations of such a document. First among them is the apologetic mood and the propitiatory attitude into which it inevitably throws the Jew. To frame excuses for the political affiliations of one's co-racialists is to invite a status of political inferiority for oneself. Jews who deny that some or many Jews are Communists, are jockeying themselves into the position of citizens on toleration, justifying their citizenship by yielding their fundamental civic right to hold any political viewpoint that seems just and wise to them as individuals.

And repudiations which begin with Communism will surely widen their range as economic and political pressure on minorities gains in intensity. Will not the gentlemen who today disclaim Jewish Communists, tomorrow disclaim Jewish Socialists? And on the morrow Jewish New Dealers and Utopians and Technocrats and even Republicans? Until ultimately these super-patriots will deem worthy Americans only such Jews as have wormed their way into fascist organizations and vigilante groups?

Equally repugnant is the inescapable deduction that what is done to Communists in Germany and elsewhere is a matter of indifference to American Jews. "Go as far as you like," it says in effect to German Nazis and their would-be imitators here, "in wreaking vengeance and destruction upon Communists whether Jewish or Gentile. But please remember that we wealthy and powerful Jews are as ardent enemies of Communism as yourselves. And let us make common cause against this common foe."

This, at a time when Jews and Communists are being tortured indiscriminately in concentration camps, when Communists in and out of Germany are heroically and desperately fighting the Jewish battle against Hitlerism, when the bond of common struggle and suffering should in decency make it unthinkable to weaken a single arm or blunt a single weapon, far less stab one's allies in the back!

That the authors of this piece of perfidy do not represent the masses of American Jews, will be made abundantly clear. They do not speak even for their own constituents. Had the majority of members in the B'nai B'rith and the Jewish Labor Committee been consulted, no such statement could have been issued. Even in the American Jewish Committee there are individuals capable of detecting the unwisdom and the ignominy of this self-betrayal. But verbal and formal repudiations of this joint statement are not enough. To counteract its poison and to preclude its repetition, Jews must take active and positive measures.

There must be a widening and strengthening of the united front against fascism in every guise and form. Such a united front will exclude none; whether he be Jew or Gentile, American or foreign-born, white or black, Communist or Socialist or radical or independent. It will recognize that the struggle against fascism cuts infinitely deeper than these differences. It will include all those exploited and endangered millions who today struggle against fascism or seek to prevent its coming. And, if by taking full and honorable part in the forging of this united front, the Jews of America write themselves down as Communists in the eyes of Messrs. Adler, Cohen and Vladeck, so be it.

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The Explosion in the A. F. of L.

BILL DUNNE

ATLANTIC CITY.

THE clash of forces, issues and prestige which rocked the thirty-fifth annual convention of the American Federation of Labor in the first of its sessions continued during the final week, made it outstanding in this respect of all its annual meetings — with the possible exception of the World War convention in Buffalo in 1917.

The convention attracted greater attention from the press, both here and abroad, than ever before. The tensity of the whole international situation, with the probability of the actual outbreak of another gigantic European and world conflict while the convention was meeting, was evident in practically all debates.

And the debates on major questions like industrial unionism, a Labor Party, the demand for the severance of relations by the organized labor movement with, and prohibition of membership in, the notorious National Civic Federation, the question of the "raiding" both old and new industrial unions by the craft organizations—were marked by an open and covert bitterness which at times verged on savagery. Tempers were on edge.

The extreme right wing of the Executive Council never really found it possible to get off to a good start in its drive to administer a sound drubbing to all advocates of industrial unionism and seat the craft organizations more firmly in control.

The strategy, at least what appeared to be the main strategy of the Executive Council majority, was to indulge in loud ballyhoo about legislative achievements—Wagner Labor Disputes Act, the Social Security Act (on which Governor Winant, administrator of the Act, threw a barrel of cold water by admitting that as yet no provisions had been made by Washington to enforce it). Around these and other measures that are supposed to do great good for "labor," the Executive Council majority attempted to create a convention sentiment which would sweep along its anti-Communist constitutional amendment, bulwark itself for the next year by acquiring additional authority to take action in the internal affairs of unions and crushingly squelch all Labor Party and industrial-union action.

It failed to reach this objective. Its prestige suffered badly!

It was pointed out in last week's article that the first sessions of the convention had shown pretty conclusively that the major issues could not be settled by formal votes. There is now no reason to change this conclusion. The supporters of industrial unionism had some 11,000 votes as against some 18,000 for the Executive Council majority. These 11,000 votes, however, represent unions in coal mining, metal mining, textile—cotton, silk and rayon especially, garment workers, auto, rubber, cement, etc. These are the living forces of the American Federation of Labor as it is today.

These unions are, for the most part, those which have greatly enlarged and consolidated their membership in the last two years. They are committed to further organization, but to carry on their campaigns successfully they have to have more power in the Federation.

In this sense the outstanding major issue in the convention—and this was decided favorably—was the organization of the unorganized. It is clear to all progressive groups that the present craft majority of the Executive Council not only throws up barriers in the way of *genuine* extension of unionization, but that its craft policy is linked with autocracy, corruption and compromises against the interests of even the crafts-union membership.

Furthermore, it is becoming clearer to workers in the big industries that the policy of "rewarding friends and punishing enemies," the so-called non-partisan political policy, is, by reason of its continual and generally shameless maneuver with the two big parties of monopoly capital, a constant threat to the strengthening of the unions.

The unprecedented and humiliating defeat handed Vice-President Matthew Woll in regard to his brazen challenge to the whole labor movement in his capacity as Acting President of the National Civic Federation, was a reflection of this general feeling among the body of delegates.

This public and dramatic repudiation of Woll and all others of similar type, was far more than the paying off of personal grudges.

IN THE months to come this convention clash will be seen to have marked a general leftward movement—a leftward movement that contains within it the healthy forces of the American organized workers, with a growing acceptance of the class struggle as the only honest and effective policy for a labor movement.

With a final vote on the Labor Party issue, which the Executive Council had delayed by a whole series of maneuvers, of 104 to 108, when perhaps a big third of the delegates had been compelled to leave for their homes); with the heads of many large delegations being afraid of a roll-call vote because of the immense popular sentiment for independent political action through a party based in the unions; it must still be said that the Labor Party issue not only made itself firmly felt in the convention, but of far greater and decisive importance, it is now a powerful movement; it has swept mass support rapidly to itself.

The organized labor movement in this country, following the Fifty-fifth convention, is on its way to a break with the parties of its enemies and their war mongering.

The temper of the convention was shown perhaps most clearly in its demonstrative reception of all speeches in opposition to war. The fraternal delegates from the British Trade Union Congress did not by any means electrify the convention with their addresses until they solemnly pronounced against fascism and war. Then they, with the delegate from the Canadian Trade and Labor Congress, got a tremendous ovation. So did President Green when he replied and spoke hopefully of closer international trade-union relations (undoubtedly indicating a favorable report by the delegation which will meet with representatives of the International Federation of Trade Unions).

But the most enthusiastic demonstration of the convention was for the expression that the time was arriving when labor would "declare its own sanctions against war."

There were no resolutions against the Soviet Union this year. Very little was heard, and this only by indirection, of the widely heralded demand of Green, Woll, American Legion officials and others, for breaking off trade and diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

But there *were* some half-dozen resolutions denouncing the Hearst press for its fascist incitements and its campaign against the Soviet Union.

The running of a candidate against Matthew Woll—for the first time in his career—was another important indication of the disgust with and hatred for anti-labor activities under any and all guises.

It was a simple demonstration of the desire of rank-and-file delegates to end the use of the labor movement by enemies inside and out. It was a simple but stern warning to the Executive Council that it would have to watch its step in this connection. It was one of those simple—and undoubtedly to some delegates, useless if not harmful—manfestations. But like the first rebuke to Woll, it will be seen in the future to have had the greatest political significance.

The Communists and the big progressive bloc in the A.F. of L. have now a huge job ahead following this history-making convention.

One of these tasks and one that was neglected during the convention is the struggle for equal rights for Negro workers. The general treatment of this question, by many officials and some of the delegates can be

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described at best as shameful neglect. It is impossible to carry on an honest struggle for a Labor Party, for industrial unionism, against war and fascism, while this festering sore of Negro discrimination stays unhealed in the vitals of the American labor movement.

THE record for the total number of resolutions in recent conventions of the American Federation of Labor was reached in this one and the general trend of these resolutions is now reflecting the processes at work within capitalism and consequently within the labor movement.

The sensational pugilistic engagement between John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers and William Hucheson of the Carpenters and Joiners (this union recently also acquired jurisdiction rights over loggers and sawmill workers on the strange theory that sawmills now produce *finished* products and keep many deserving Hucheson supporters from getting jobs done by these loggers and lumbermen) on the floor of the convention, with Hucheson kicking an aged and decrepit delegate in lieu of Lewis, was very interesting while it lasted.

It got plenty of publicity in the metropolitan press. But it did not show anything except the anger of rivals for control of the Executive Council—rivals whose views of the rank and file differ little if any, both believing apparently that the chief right of a member is to pay dues—and keep his mouth shut about the high standard of living of his officials.

In the proceedings of the second day of the convention there are sixty-eight solidly-printed pages of resolutions. About a hundred had been printed the day before.

These resolutions represent the concentrated thought of the members of organized labor in this country. They are the documents that show the wishes of the members —and they are of far greater importance for this reason than a public denunciation of your correspondent by President Green because he spoke for the Communist Party against the Wagner Bill before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor.

These resolutions are of immeasurably greater importance than the highly unscientific exhibition put on by Green and Hucheson. The real reason for this personal conflict—like those other sharp encounters between high-salaried officials—is to be found in the mass of resolutions.

Among these are to be found the resolutions introduced by John L. Lewis by unanimous consent. They came into the convention because of the definite trend of rank-and-file sentiment — to which Lewis, like Woll, has to cater at least once in a while. Read the two resolutions submitted by Lewis. They are short and to the point. They changed a policy of toleration of official conniving with the employers to one of opposition and reprisal for violations of this policy. The resolutions of the United Mine Workers delegation said:

> RESOLVED, that no officer of the American Federation of Labor shall act as an officer of the National Civic Federation, or be a member thereof.
>
> United Mine Workers of America.

> RESOLVED, that the American Federationist is hereby prohibited from the acceptance of advertisements or paid printing of any character from concerns which do not generally recognize and practice collective bargaining with legitimate organizations of labor.
>
> The Executive Council is hereby expressly directed to execute this policy.
>
> United Mine Workers of America.

This fight for prestige and place in the Fifty-fifth convention, more than in any other convention since the World War, had to occur on fundamental issues because the membership forced it in this direction.

This is shown by the resolutions, by the battles on the convention floor, by new alignments of forces—as well as by the personal conflicts of members of the upper stratum of union-labor officialdom.

The march toward a progressive program in which some advances were made clearly is a march forced by great pressure from the local unions, federal labor unions and central bodies—from which most all resolutions came into the convention.

Young workers played a big part in the Fifty-fifth convention. And not only by specific resolutions dealing with the problems of young workers, but by their organizational ability, in debate and in the committees.

The young workers of the United States put their stamp on the Fifty-fifth convention. They must be given a large measure of credit for what a special wire to The New York World-Telegram, Oct. 17, characterized thus:

> Today the pet project of Mr. Green and Vice-President Matthew Woll, a bigger and better Red-baiting campaign alleged by its opponents to be designed for use in punishing militant union elements, lay in ruins. The A.F. of L. Executive Council confessed defeat by dropping its formally advanced project for an amendment to the constitution authorizing suspension of any union which "represented" Communists—the Council to decide. . . .

Such damaging blows do not add to the prestige of an officialdom confronted by young delegates from the new unions in basic industries.

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the recipe for feeling like a million
dollars.

Whose wheels are free and individually sprung
under the slippery gear-shifts of Detroit;
who ride in welded steel with armchair ease,
wholesomely ventilated and sun-sprayed;
who seek upon the roads that never end
since they go nowhere, the heart's habitat—
turning for hours upon a lathe of motion
their hope of happiness to a shape of hope;—
these engineers of pleasure who behind
the windshields of direction and cigars
support a chromium and high-speed dream
that all's well with the inside of the world
because stream-lines of envy follow when
elated with comfort and the lift of gas
they open up their throttles toward the sun—

Give it a thought! they sleep in varnished beds
with cures for belly-ache laid out in reach
and sterile women lying all night beside.
For there's a trick of famine in this design
for stepped-up elegance—look at their wives,
girdled and boned for love, continually
with snappish eyes and clicking fingernails
dealing out cards and caviar and craft
through endless afternoons—till dark comes down;
and all the plate and posture's folded up
and all the chemicals of youth rubbed on,
and they go dry to sleep, or wet to lust.

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THOSE WHO GOT SLAPPED

Russell T. Limbach.

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Canada Swings to the Left

ROBERT BRUCE

OTTAWA.

SOVIET RUSSIA, Communism and the coming of socialism are the burning topics of the hour in every part of Canada. From the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the border of the United States to the far, frozen north, these three names are on the tip of the tongue of almost every person.

For five years and more the people of Canada have starved in the midst of plenty. They have talked and tried every other way out. Now they turn to more and more frequent discussion of these three subjects. The climax came with the Canadian general election campaign which tore the country loose from end to end, and during the last two months. The general fear was that Richard Bedford Bennett, a multi-millionaire corporation lawyer, would remain prime minister and so the people turned to his strongest political opponent to replace him. This, however, does not mean that William Lyon Mackenzie King, who succeeds Bennett as the result of the recent poll has the confidence of the people. He is a little more popular and a little less domineering, that's all. Eight out of the nine Canadian provinces had elected members of the same political party as King and the voters felt that they would make the Dominion parliament itself follow along the same line. This would leave no excuse for reforms.

Underneath the surface the same class feelings exist in Canada as in all other industrial nations. The struggle in Canada is even more keen than in most other countries, for the masses are among the most exploited of all the English-speaking world. Only ten per-cent of Canada's national wealth is owned by the common people of Canada. The poor are getting poorer and the rich richer. Unemployment is increasing everywhere. Those who still have jobs are being driven still harder than ever before. The standard of living is going down day by day. Yet the great corporations are declaring greater dividends. The total net earnings of 254 of Canada's largest companies increased from $86,500,000 in 1933-34 to $148,500,000 in 1934-35. The number of shareholders became still fewer, a mere handful of men controling the life of the nation.

The people have tried almost every quack remedy. In the prairie province of Alberta, for example, they had sickened of the two old capitalist parties in provincial politics years ago. They had put in a United Farmers of Alberta government, which had the support of many farmers and city workers. Last month they swept it out of office to try a new reform movement called the Social Credit Party which promised every resident of that province a certain cash sum of money each month. Yet the people admit that this is only a protest against the two old parties. In ever increasing numbers they say: "We'll try every quack remedy first and then turn to a change in the system of society." More and more they are coming to the view that the way out is the "establishment of a Socialist Canada," as advocated by the Communists.

Both the political and economic movements of the working class are much stronger in Canada than in the United States. In proportion to population, more than twice as many Canadians are organized in labor unions as in the United States. Labor and farmer provincial and municipal governments have been numerous.

Yet the workers are split into five different labor organizations. Most of them are in the American Federation of Labor. Others belong to a purely Canadian national union movement. In the province of Quebec and a few places in other provinces the Catholic unions control tens of thousands. The Workers Unity League, however, is the most militant. Ninety percent of the strikes of the last two or three years have been led by it. This organization is led by Communists and it is powerful in many sections of Canada. Many of its strikes have won important demands for large groups of wage workers.

The leadership of the American Federation of Labor in Canada is just as reactionary as in the United States. Tom Moore, president of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, which is composed of the A.F. of L. unions in this country, recently resigned to accept a government position paying a large salary. For years he had received fat plums from the Dominion government, whether it was Conservative or Liberal.

Many of the largest cities of Canada have labor mayors and labor aldermen and other elected officials. Toronto, a city of 800,000 population, the largest English-speaking city in the Dominion, has a so-called labor mayor. He is one of the vice-presidents of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada. The mayor of Winnipeg, the largest city of the Middle West, is a member of the Labor Party. He was imprisoned for his activities in the Winnipeg general strike of 1919.

Two aldermen in Winnipeg are Communists, while one in Windsor, Ontario, also is a Communist. Blairmore, Alberta, a mining town, has a Communist mayor and town council. The principal street of the town is called Tim Buck Avenue after Tim Buck, who as secretary of the Communist Party of Canada was sent to prison when the Communist Party was declared illegal.

Fascist organizations, however, are very strong in every part of the Dominion. The Brown Shirts, definitely anti-Communist and anti-semitic, numbered more than 60,000 members at one time. They were mostly found in Montreal, Quebec and other cities of the province of Quebec and nearby provinces. Other fascist organizations with large memberships are called "Forty and Over Clubs," while numerous other organizations with fascist tendencies go by other names.

The British government, at the very time it gained control of Canada from France in 1763 decided to rule by division of the people along racial and religious lines. It encouraged settlement of Canada by English-speaking people and started them off by creating ill feeling between French-speaking Roman Catholics and English-speaking Protestants. The exploiters of Canada have followed this policy to this day. Most of the people of Quebec are French-speaking Roman Catholics. The hierarchy has received the aid of Canada's exploiters in arousing them against the people of other provinces. The Loyal Orange lodge and the Sons of England, two other extreme Protestant organizations which are led by rabid Protestant preachers and ambitious politicians, are used in Ontario and other English-speaking provinces to create racial feeling against the people of Quebec.

The Roman Catholic bishops and the grand masters of the Orange lodges, however, have formed a united front on one issue. That is the fight against Communism. They have vied with one another to see which could be most venomous in attacks on Russia.

Their influence is growing less with the rapid worsening of the economic condition of the Canadian people. Yet they are still powerful and have joined in support of the most severe criminal laws and against militant working-class organizations. Section 98 of the Criminal Code contains as vicious clauses against working-class unity as any law in any part of the English-speaking world. Under this section any one is considered guilty of the charge made against him until he can prove his innocence.

Premier-elect King, in a radio speech during the recent election campaign, said that he would seek its repeal. But he issued this warning: "The Liberal Party will give no quarter to Communism. Those who advocate the overthrow of our existing institutions are enemies of society and should be so regarded."

The recently-elected Liberal premier of British Columbia is using it against workers while the attorney general in the recently-elected Liberal government of Ontario says that as long as it is law it will be enforced.

It was under Section 98 that Tim Buck, secretary of the Communist Party of Canada, and seven other active Communists were convicted after the Communist Party was declared illegal in November, 1931. Shots were

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fired into Buck's cell in Kingston Penitentiar to murder him. After Buck had served half of his term of five years in Kingston Penitentiary he was released because of a nation-wide protest resulting from the activities of the Canadian Labor Defense League.

Meanwhile, Section 98 was being applied in various parts of the country with new arrests and raiding of numerous homes.

Among those sent to prison under it was Sam Scarlett, veteran member of the Industrial Workers of the World in the United States, who was deported to Scotland after serving his term in Leavenworth Penitentiary. Scarlett returned to Canada where he was given a year in solitary confinement for his activities in an important strike. While there, Scarlett, who has served nearly ten years in all in one hundred penitentiaries and jails, organized a branch of the Canadian Labor Defense League among the guards.

Another arrested under it was Arthur Evans, another Communist, who was sent to jail in Princeton, British Columbia, for leading a miners' strike. Evans again is awaiting trial for his activities in behalf of the march started on Ottawa by relief-camp workers in British Columbia. These youth who ranged in age from eighteen to twenty years received a mere twenty cents a day for slave labor in logging and other camps. They got as far as Regina, Saskatchewan, in their march to Ottawa. The city and mounted police staged a riot in which a Mounted Policeman killed a city police officer. Evans and other leaders of the strikers were arrested, some of those arrested under Section 98 being charged with walking on the highways in the direction of Ottawa, thousands of miles away.

Last year marked a new high record in the number of arrests of workers for labor activities. Yet the first six months of this year saw more arrested than in all of 1934. An orgy of deportations of foreign-born workers from Canada has taken place during the last three or four years, their only "crime" being participation in the labor movement or the equally foul "crime" of being unemployed.

With labor struggles being waged from coast to coast, the time rolled round for the Dominion elections. The Communists made every effort to create a united labor front with the Canadian Commonwealth Federation, a majority of whose members favor a chnge in the system of society. In explaining why it was necessary to oppose certain C.C.F. candidates, The Worker, the Communist newspaper, declared: "In every case where a C.C.F. candidate is opposed to a Communist candidate he is a rabid reactionary and an opponent of labor unity." A majority of the C.C.F. candidates agreed to cooperate with the Communists and in such cases most of them received large votes and in several cases they were elected.

The Conservative government saw to it that the 20,000 boys in the relief camps receiving twenty cents a day as slaves could not vote while tens of thousands of other workers were disfranchised.

Bennett, one of the most reactionary public men in the history of Canadian public life, constantly trotted out the Red scare throughout his campaign tour from coast to coast. From the very day that he assumed office five years ago he has used these tactics. He, more than any other person, was responsible for Canada's refusal to trade with Soviet Russia and he had much to do with the outlawing of the Communist Party.

During the election campaign just closed he repeated slanders he made in the House of Commons to the effect that the On-to-Ottawa Trek of the Relief Camp strikers was a plot to "overthrow constitutional government and set up a Soviet Canada."

In Vancouver he went still farther, declaring that when the Ontario hunger marchers came to Ottawa in August they planned to kidnap him while a Soviet government was to be established in the Dominion. Even newspapers supporting him ridiculed this speech.

The successful Liberal Party as well as the retreating Conservative Party, the two bourgeois parties that have alternately misruled Canada ever since its birth 67 years ago, fitted their campaign cries to the particular province where they made them. So did the Reconstructionist Party, a new party formed by the dying little storekeepers with the aid of some farmers and small-town workers. This party spent much of its time exposing the great department and chain stores. It put across much information about the concentration of wealth and the corruption of the capitalist press. Yet the only candidate out of very many nominated by this mushroom group elected was its leader, Harry Stevens, who had recently deserted Bennett's government. The Social Credit Party which swept Alberta a month before had not had time to fail in its absurd promise to give each person a certain sum of money each month. So it carried most of Alberta and part of the neighboring province of Saskatchewan. Many of the candidates of the Candian Commonwealth Federation also endeavored to "straddle the fence" on ticklish questions. Others, however, carried on campaign which received the support of the Communists through a united front.

In British Columbia, Canada's far-western province, the race cry was raised by both the Conservative and Liberal parties. Bennett had recently had a tariff quarrel with the Japanese government and so he told a Westminster, British Columbia, audience that "a vote for King is a vote for Japan."

The Liberal Party placed advertisements in the capitalist press quoting from the official parliamentary reports to show that C.C.F. leaders had come out in favor of giving the vote to Chinese and other workers of Asiatic origin who were born in Canada. Certain C.C.F. candidates tried to avoid the issue.

Gerry McGeer, mayor of Vancouver and a Liberal Party candidate, in public speeches said that the "Reds would scrap the Empire and make Canada a Soviet." He was beaten.

Tim Buck made a magnificent fight in Winnipeg. North, A. A. Heaps, the sitting member in the last House of Commons, ran on the Canadian Commonwealth Federation ticket but with fascist support. Col. Ralph Webb, former mayor of Winnipeg who declared a short time ago that extra-legal strong-arm gangs should be organized to beat up militant workers, was one of the principal supporters of Heaps. Webb was the chief Conservative organizer for Manitoba. The Winnipeg Tribune, the Conservative Party newspaper, shrieked that "unless the electors do some straight thinking, and some determined voting, a Communist victory . . . may very easily happen. So the choice in North Winnipeg is quite clear. It is the election of Heaps or it is victory for the Communist candidate." The Conservatives, of course, did not put a candidate in the field. The total vote for Buck in this constituency was more than the total of all the nine Communist Party candidates throughout Canada in the elections of 1930.

The Conservative Party race cry in the province of Quebec was of quite a different nature from that in British Columbia. At least eighty percent of the population of this, the second most populous province of the Dominion, is French-Canadian.

The Conservative Party placed a large advertisement in most of the French-Canadian newspapers depicting an alleged, bearded "Bolshevik" carrying a rifle in one hand and a hammer and sickle in the other. "Shall we abolish Section 98?" was the caption for this cartoon. It also pictured Communists in Soviet Russia tearing down a cross from a church, confiscating crops and property, and also the destruction of the family through the "nationalization" of a woman who was being driven by a Red soldier at the point of the bayonet.

A campaign newspaper distributed by the Conservative Party also attacked the Communists. It said that Bennett proved his worth as Premier through his use of Section 98 to jail "the Jewish Communist, Tim Buck, and other Moscow agitators." It happens that Tim Buck was born in England of English Gentile parentage.

Throughout the Dominion thirteen Communist candidates polled at least five times as many votes as were counted for nine Communist Party candidates in 1930, and this despite the fact that the Communist Party itself is illegal in Canada today, while its name appeared on the ballots five years ago. The influence of Communists in the election of most of the successful C.C.F. candidates and the large vote polled by scores of C.C.F. standard bearers in various constituencies in nearly every province where they were not elected was tremendous. Canada, from coast to coast, is resounding to the cries of "Soviet Russia," "Communism" and "A Socialist Canada," for Canada is swinging to the Left.

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Pelzer

"Just Another of Those Damned Strike Towns"

FIELDING BURKE

GOD is in Pelzer. He is on the tongue of every third person you meet there. "God won't stand fer this," a man will tell you. "As shore as there's a God in Heaven, we're goin' to pull out of this mess," says another.

"Yeah," jeers a skeptic. "We'll be with the sheep, I reckon, when we're divided on the day of Jedgment, but I wish the goats would let us have something to eat right now. I'm hungry."

Many people in Pelzer are hungry. The last human that I spoke to when I was on my way to take the 'bus out of town was visibly perishing for food. She was a tiny girl, trim as a pixy. As I passed a forlorn house she came down the steps, repressing her sobs. She seemed to be about four years old until her wet eyes looked up at me. Under her match-stick of an arm was a school tablet, so she must have been six. As she left the house her father in the door urged her forward very harshly. But his blustering voice had love and desperation in it. She came on, pushed by that voice and I let her overtake me while I busied myself getting a nickel out of my purse. (I had overstayed my time in Pelzer and was looking for nickels, not quarters.) When she had the nickel she held it up unbelievingly between thumb and finger, then ran back toward the house, holding it high. "May I keep it, daddy?"

She was resigned to giving it away. Her contribution to family support. So early are the children made a part of the supreme effort to get bread. But "daddy" nodded his head and she ran back to me, accepting me as a part of God's world and ready to tell me what she had been crying about. "I didn't have anything to take to school. There wasn't anything left from breakfast. Daddy didn't eat any breakfast. He was feelin' bad."

There was more than one house in Pelzer that morning where daddy had eaten no breakfast. A determined effort to break down the workers' union (a local branch of the U.T.W.A.) is now organized in Pelzer and functioning with both subtle and open force. A year ago the union was strong, taking uncompromising part in the general strike that threw such a scare into the breasts of the mill-owners. God, they nearly won! With the "settlement" of the strike, mill companies became busy strengthening company unions and organizing new ones. The workers had to be persuaded or coerced away from their big national union. In the Pelzer mills there were a few men ready to obey the company. A "Good Will Association" was organized with about twenty members. Non-union workers were easily corralled into it. "Stand by the company and it will stand by you," they were told. As the "Good Willers" increased in numbers the company became more aggressive. Whenever a man was fired he was invariably a member of the U.T.W.A. One by one excellent workers were dropped for no reason whatever until over fifty union members had been discharged.

When the strike came you could read in all the newspapers that the union struck because one man, Roscoe Smith, had been fired. That is not the story. Paul Ross, president of the local branch, had gone to Blackmon, manager of the four Pelzer mills and asked a hearing for the fifty discharged men.

"Are you running these mills, or am I?" Blackmon threw at him.

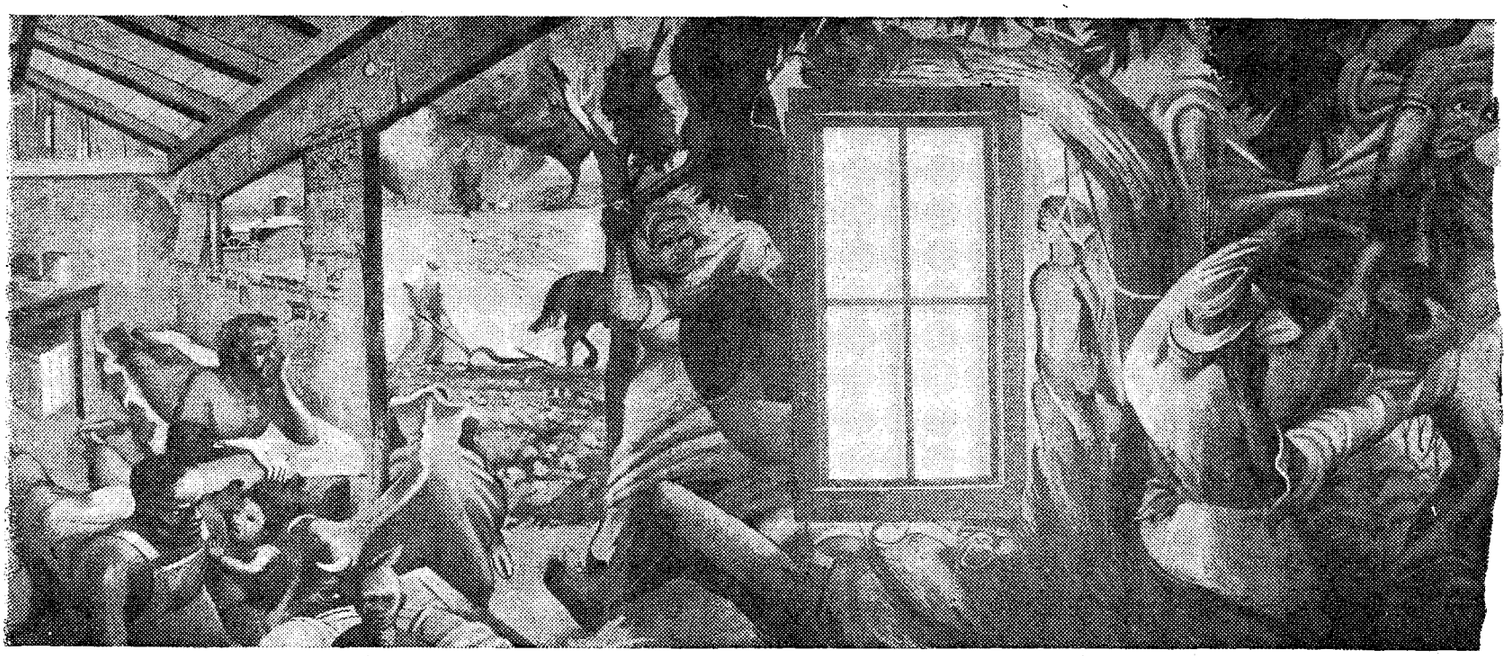
"If I didn't think you were running them I wouldn't come to you," said Ross, a mild, slim fellow with big, peaceable blue eyes and a most dependable backbone. "I ask you in the name of the United Textile Workers of America to reconsider these cases."

"Who yer talkin' about? I don't know those people. Don't know anything about 'em?"

"Well, Mr. Blackmon, I'll tell you how you can find out. Just fire another union man."

In a few days Roscoe Smith was fired and the strike was called that night. Blackmon went at midnight to the leading grocer, whose store was mill property (the company owns Pelzer in toto) and told him to put all sales on a cash basis or move out. No credit foolishness! Old Man Hunger would take care of this strike!

But funds came in. Didn't they have national backing? A great union was behind them. They could live.



THE STRUGGI

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Strike-breakers were imported. Some of them the usual thugs. Many of them poverty-ridden families from Georgia and Alabama. Workers against workers. Driven into line against one another by the whip of hunger held in the hands of those who own.

The Governor sent in the National Guards to "protect life and property" and under their guns the mills continued to operate. The company refused to make the slightest concession and the Guards could not remain indefinitely. Taxpayers were howling. Very well. The management felt that it was not prepared to handle the situation. They were ready to "let the striking devils have it."

ON Saturday the troops were withdrawn. On Sunday night men with guns were smuggled into one of the mills and several times through the night there was firing through the windows at the unarmed strikers out in front. Cole, the young constable in the employ of the management, was found in the neighborhood of the mill. Winkler, leader of the men on picket—"little Winkie," they loved to call him—went to Cole. "For God's sake, get those murderers out of the mill before they kill some of us!" Cole hesitated. "You can go in," said Winkler. "They won't fire on you and you *know* it!" What "Winkie" wanted most of all was to get guns and fight back. But he knew that would be suicide for all his men, the final death of their union. They had to stand unarmed and be shot at, or run. And they were not going to run. Not yet.

The company was still making gestures toward "law and order" and Cole said he would phone to Anderson for the sheriff. When he came from the phone he reported that the sheriff was on his way to Pelzer. But he didn't arrive until nine o'clock Monday when everything was quiet except for groups knotted in talk over the tragedies of the night and morning. "Seven hours for the sheriff to drive twenty miles!" shouted Winkie. "He was rarin' to get here, wasn't he, boys?"

Gertrude Kelley was dead and seventeen men were wounded. Around six a. m. fire had been poured into the picket-line not only from the mill windows, but from the left of the line and from the hill street above it. A voice had been heard from the hill, "Let's go get 'em, boys." A man had appeared at a mill window, holding up his hands as if in signal, a shot rang from the hill in answer and scores of shots followed, from the mill, from the group stationed at the left and from the hillside. There was one line of escape for those on the picket-line—into the railroad cut at the right, with its high cement walls. All made a dash for the cut. The most inhuman moment of those inhuman hours arrived. Firing was concentrated on each end of the cut. Gertrude Kelley stopped at the entrance to the cut and leaned against the cement wall. Perhaps she was overcome with fright, or exhausted with the rapid dash. A bullet struck her in the throat, curved down through her lungs and stopped against her ribs. She took a step forward, fell to her knees, rose, with her hand slung blood from her throat, took another step and fell dying. Twenty-three years old and the mother of two little girls, Barbara Jean and Sybil Virginia.

"I don't know how I'll get along without Gertie," a young woman said to me. "She could think of so many things to say that made you feel good. No matter how hard the day was she always came in with a joke to pass around. I never saw anybody with more life than she had. She was a good mother too, and her home was always as neat as Sunday. I don't know how she found time for it. I have to sling things about and run to work, but Gertie could keep up her home and work too."

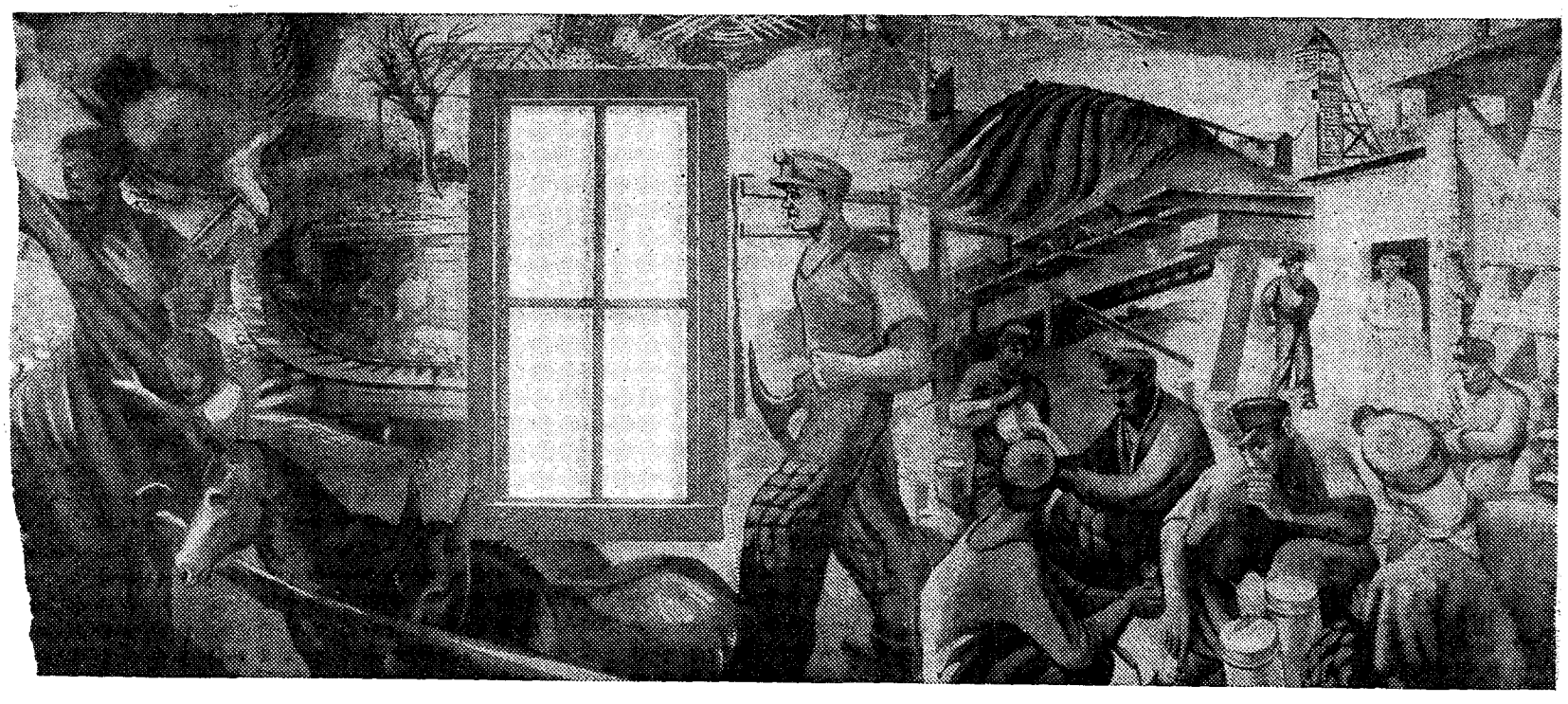
"Was she nice-looking?"

"She was the prettiest thing in the mills. Her head covered with dark brown curls and no 'perm' either."

George Washington Henson, sixty-five years old, was arrested for the murder of Gertrude. He told me about it as I sat talking to him and his wife on their little front porch.

"I've known Gertie since she was knee-high to a duck," he said, "and she's always played around with my little girl. I'd as soon turned a gun on myself as at Gertie. Through the Sunday night I heard shootin' at the mill, but my wife wouldn't let me go down. Soon as it was grey day I got my old shot-gun that hadn't been fired since I shot at a duck on the river last February and set out for the picket-line. When I got there they said I was welcome, but the gun couldn't come on the line. I was an' old feller and Winkler told me I'd better keep out o' the way of the firin'. So I went up and sat behind the bandhall till it was all over. I laid my gun down at my feet and never fired it at all. When the shootin' stopped I picked it up and carried it home. Everybody could see it. I thought I had a right to carry my gun and I would have used it, I reckon, if Winkler hadn't told me they had to picket peaceable. Lord, I wouldn't stand there an' all them guns pintin' at me."

As Henson was the only union man that had been seen with a gun he was promptly arrested. But the bullet was taken from Gertrude's body and it proved to be from a forty-five calibre pistol. The murder charge against Henson had to be dropped. He was then indicted, with eighteen others, for rioting and violence and kept in jail a week before bond could be arranged. Only the strikers were jailed. Not a man who had shot at them was arrested. At the inquest of Gertrude Kelley I heard many witnesses identify men whom they had seen shooting toward the strikers—among them the con-



THE SOUTH

A Mural in Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark., by Joe Jones

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stable, Cole—but as no one could swear to the actual bullet that had struck her the jury gave their verdict "death by person unknown." Not a man who had been seen in the act of shooting was indicted, but the arrest of the strikers continued. Up to the day of my leaving Pelzer, sixty-three union men had been arrested and some were still in jail, with Paul Ross making desperate efforts to secure bond. Their arrest worked to the advantage of the mill company in two ways. It kept the union funds in such a state of depletion that nothing was left with which to feed the strikers. Then when the Governor, after the tragedy, had called a conference on the situation, the manager of the mills had been made to sign an agreement for the company forcing recognition of the union and the re-employment of all strikers who had not been guilty of violence. They were not to be re-employed at once, but gradually and all were to be at work by January 1. Before that date many will have been proved "guilty of violence," unless help comes from some source not now apparent.

Ella Thomas, head of the relief committee said, "If I go into another house where there isn't a scrap to eat and I've nothing to give them I'll go crazy. I run to the Post Office every time a mail comes in and there isn't a thing. There's a bakery in Greenville that will give us bread if we go after it and I can't get money for the gasoline."

When a dollar was dropped into her lap it wasn't a minute until she had drawn on her stockings and shoes and was rushing for a car.

HOW are they to be fed until January 1? Some were walking out into the country to pick cotton. They could make fifty cents a day, they told me, and walk there and back, if it wasn't "terrible far." The greatest concern, of course, was for the children. It is agony over the children that causes surrender. The "Good Will Association" knows how to turn that screw. When the trouble in Pelzer began there was a general scattering of children among relatives, so far as there were relatives who could possibly receive and feed them. Paul Ross took two of his four up to his mother in Spartanburg.

The federal-relief truck passes through the country once a week and strikers are not debarred from its benefits. The Hensons asked me to share their home, which I did and I was there the day that Mrs. Henson walked two miles to secure her "relief" from the truck. She came back with two small cans of chopped meat (which you could eat, she said, if you had a few onions to cut up with it and give it a "taste"), less than a half-gallon measure of sweet potatoes and a pound of butter. There was never enough butter on the truck to go around and she was lucky to get any that day. This food was one week's "relief" for two adults.

What troubled Henson most was not hunger but the fear that the "union" would break down. "We were strong last year and won that big strike. Anyhow they said we won it. The company had to promise to let us have our union and then they set to work to break it up ever' way they could think of. Looks like they've about done it, with so many of us havin' to scatter away from here or set down an' starve. There's something wrong shorely when a man works like a mule all his life, never havin' any pleasure-money at all and then comes to the end of his days with nothin' but charity to keep him alive."

He was a fine-looking old man, the very clean, clear-skinned kind, with youthful brown eyes indicating that he could even now enjoy a little "pleasure-money" if he had it.

From the little back porch of the Henson house one could look on a scene of great beauty. In a choice for a foundation no town could be more blessed. The Saluda River winds there, among hills that have fragments of green valleys creeping about them and up their sides. The water-oaks are gigantic, as they should be to hold up such luxuriant foliage. The mills themselves are not disfiguring. They are built of russet-red brick, a color full of both age and life and there is dignity in their symmetrical towers, a great cleanliness in their shining windows. Below them is the winding river, back of them the rolling hills and above them a tender sky with slow, restful clouds. Security and happiness! Work and joy! Incredible that men could crouch behind those gleaming windows to shoot out on their unarmed fellow-men.

THE houses of the mill-workers are not set in stiff rows, but are dropped along winding roads and tucked into spaces of varied shapes—triangular, circular or geometrically undefinable—imposed by the hilly ground.

Any householder will recognize the air of resistance, humanity pitted against dirt, which hangs about the dwellings. There are many little gardens, patches here and there shaped like the palm of your hand and sometimes not much bigger. There are flowers before the doors and in innumerable buckets on the porches. I stopped so long before the loveliness of one yard that its owner came out to join me. She was grey-haired and unbelievably thin, but her little boy about her skirts was evidence against age. In the yard were long rows of periwinkle, the tall, white kind with the carmine heart and there was a spreading lantana, the largest I ever saw, with hundreds of its outheld many-colored clusters. She said it would grow from cuttings and I begged a sprig to try out in my mountain garden. A pale flush of pride came to her chalk-white face as she gave it to me. It was a beautiful garden and no hands but her own had tended it. The women behind all of the flowers were so devastatingly human. And so hungry. How good it would be to hear them cry out: "To hell with patience! We will march these streets and not plant a flower until our withered children are given a chance to grow."

On the mind of the founder of Pelzer was checked and figured the feudal pattern of a "gentleman." In the eighteen and eighties he had sought controlling stock in the mills of Piedmont, a town several miles away. Unable to obtain it, he set out down the river to find rock shoals where a dam could be built and plucked a spot from the forest for founding his mills and his town. He built houses and filled them with workers—his workers. He gave them churches, where they learned to bow to God's will—his will. He gave them schools, where they were taught their place in a feudal kingdom—his kingdom. And the impress of it all still lingers. An old woman told me how she had begun to work for him when only a girl and made twenty cents a day. With pride she insisted that he was a "good, fair man. If we had him back we wouldn't be havin' this trouble."

But they are learning. A bare cupboard speaks without equivocation. Bullets whizzing around you tell you something you don't forget. I thought of Paul Ross testifying at the inquest.

> Coroner: Did you see where the shooting came from?
>
> Ross: No. Paul Holcombe fell at my feet and I was busy trying to get him out.
>
> Coroner: (Very loudly) Then you don't know from what direction the shooting came?
>
> Ross: Seemed to me that it was coming from every direction. But I didn't have time to look about. That man was badly hurt and I didn't want another bullet to hit him. Bullets were flying pretty thick in that spot and I had to get him out. That was all I could think about. We were coming out of the railroad cut and the firing was hot there.

I thought of Holcombe, the wounded man, whom I had visited the day before. He had a bullet hole in the abdomen and another in his thigh. The "union" had supplied a doctor, but there was no food in the house. There were two little children, very nice and quiet and the young wife with patient eyes was going to walk to the "relief" truck for two little tins of tasteless hamburger and a handful of sweet potatoes. And she would get some bread when Ella Thomas returned from Greenville. They were all quietly happy because the doctor had told them that day that daddy might get well and they could let him sit up in bed for half an hour.

And I remembered "little Winkie" making a speech. He wrung his hands, looking as if he might burst with rebellion. There were tears of anger on his cheeks, as he told how his unarmed men had been shot down around him. "But I'll never stand there like that again. If we have to call another strike —and it looks like it—we'll scour the country for guns and we'll die *fighting!*"

They are learning. And when they know their strength, they will need nobody to tell them to use it!

> These strong, who for the weak make beauty sure,
> How long will they endure
> An earth of ashes and a sky of brass?

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Correspondence

"The Noble Aryans"

To THE NEW MASSES:

As a sociologist, I should like to supplement G. Gaard's excellent review of Howell's *Our Aryan Ancestors* in the October 8 issue of THE NEW MASSES.

The term "Aryan" has little or no scientific standing as a racial designation. It is, of course, a favorite term of popularizers of the myth of white superiority, and now widely used by the Nazis in their anti-Semitic glorification of the Teutons.

Bukharin (*Historical Materialism, A System of Sociology,* English tr., 1926; pp. 126-9) and many other Marxists have shown the role of fallacious race theory in beclouding social analysis.

In its limited scientific usage, the term "Aryan" refers to *language* and not to race! In rejecting the theory of "Aryanism," the Marxists are supported by the findings and opinions of many eminent bourgeois sociologists (see writings of Boas, Hertz, Hankins, Taylor et al.). The statement of Prof. F. H. Hankins of Smith College is authoritative:

> . . . (Research) had made clear numerous similarities among what are now called the Indo-European or Aryan (or Indo-German) tongues. . . . Accordingly it seemed logical to conclude that there must have been a race or people which spoke the original parent language. . . . (It was claimed) that this supposititious Aryan race was especially gifted with culture-producing capacities and had, indeed, been the creator of all the great civilization both ancient and modern. . . .
>
> . . . (Contrary evidence) led scholars of the first rank even before 1890 to declare either that the Aryan doctrine was a figment of the professorial imagination or that it was incapable of clarification because the crucial evidence was lost, apparently forever.
>
> ("Aryanism," in *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences,* vol. 2, pp. 264-65.)

Doubtless this is all quite familiar to the reviewer, but (perhaps due to space limitations) it is not sufficiently revealed and stressed in his review. To be sure, he disapprovingly places the term "Aryan race" in quotation marks, and condemns its loose, naive and vague use; but he neglects to inform the reader specifically of the actual *non-existence* of a "noble race" of Aryans—Dr. Howell and the Nazis to the contrary notwithstanding!

Chicago, Ill. DALE ALLEN.

Mutiny in Michigan

To THE NEW MASSES:

In Detroit, as well as in many other large communities in America, there exists a body of men who dedicate themselves to the welfare of their city. Such an organization is the Detroit Citizens League. One of the functions of this august body is to send questionnaires to office-seeking individuals and to find out their motives, intentions, political affiliations and esthetic tastes. If the candidate in question passes the above mentioned examination, as many do, he then stands the chance of being endorsed by this ever-vigilant League.

Those inclined to slander will come forward with rash statements like: "this League is just a tool in the hands of big business; they will never endorse anyone fighting for the rights of Labor" or "the Common Council is filled with grafters who were endorsed by the Detroit Citizens League." But we hasten to assure you that such talk is absolutely unfounded and should be labeled as propaganda. It is true, that up to date, many of those endorsed by the League have sooner or later succumbed to the temptation of pocketing a coin or so. We will also admit that the majority of office-holders, after being endorsed and proposed for office by the League, have forgotten their pledges to the voters and thought only of their own interests—but such phenomena should be attributed to manifold influences which one faces in our complex society, phenomena which certainly cannot be foreseen by this body.

The League's inability to put an honest man into office, you will be convinced by now, is not its own fault; the only agency we can contribute it to is some supernatural power over which we humans have no control. But that its bad standing with the Almighty should prompt certain people to turn from it, is something we fail to understand. To illustrate our point we shall quote verbatim a copy of a letter received by the League from a man by the name of Maurice Sugar. It reads as follows:

> Detroit Citizens League
> 1022 Dime Bank Bldg., Detroit, Mich.
> Dear Sirs:
>
> Enclosed you will find questionnaire submitted to Fay O'Camb. You already have the questionnaire of William McKie. As for Maurice Sugar, you already have all the information you want about him—more than you want, we are sure.
>
> We are enclosing the Labor platform upon which McKie, O'Camb and Sugar are running. Read it—and weep.
>
> May we add that if you were to consider any of us qualified for office, the unfortunate victim would be disposed to withdraw. We know that you are a political front for big business in the city. If you know your stuff you will be against us—for the same reasons that will prompt the workers and middle class elements to look favorably upon our candidacies.
>
> Very truly yours,
> (signed) MAURICE SUGAR.

This marks the first time in the history of our great city that a candidate or a group of candidates have deliberately refused the endorsement of this noble body. The conclusion which we are prompted to draw is this: either Mr. Sugar and his colleagues are turning from the League because of its poor batting average, or, they consider the Detroit Citizens League to be a body of men whose intentions are not at all times altruistic.

Detroit. LEWIS FALL.

For Southern Miners

To THE NEW MASSES:

The Committee in Support of Southern Miners has been formed to aid union organization in the Kentucky coal fields.

Work has already been started to awaken interest in and sympathy for rank-and-file unionism among the coal miners of Kentucky. The ultimate purpose of this work is to crystalize trade-union consciousness and to form locals of the United Mine Workers of America, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.

It is unnecessary to point out to readers of THE NEW MASSES the necessity for such organization, or to describe the terrorist tactics which have met previous attempts of the miners to form their own unions.

This committee intends to publish a bulletin periodically informing its members of the progress of this work. We hope to give publicity to current conditions in that region and materially aid the miners in their struggles for decent living standards.

We ask THE NEW MASSES to publish this letter, urging their readers to join the Committee in Support of Southern Miners and give their active cooperation by

1. Making monthly pledges to support this work in Kentucky.
2. Making this project known among their friends and soliciting their personal cooperation.

LOUIS KAMSLY, Secretary, pro tem.

304 West 92nd St., Room 83,
New York City.

PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE: Charles Angoff, Newton Arvin, Lester Cohen, Henry Hart, Louis Kronenberger, Grace Lumpkin, William Mangold, Leane Zugsmith, Dr. Mark Graubard, Albert Halper, Abraham Isserman.

Letters in Brief

Creighton J. Hill of Wellesley Hills, Mass., writes to call Richard Wright's "Joe Louis Uncovers Dynamite" the "finest piece of writing that I have seen in any publication in a long time." He wants NEW MASSES to "turn more poets loose on assignments like this." Oril Brown, Evanston, Ill., protests against the "moral-pointing foreword" to Wright's article, asking "Can't you let a piece of creative writing speak for itself?" E. Colman of New York, writes that NEW MASSES showed "damned poor editorial sense" in publishing the article at all and that it will cost us the renewal of his subscription.

William Richards, of Los Angeles, sends in a renewal subscription and remarks that THE NEW MASSES becomes a trifle "too polysyllabically technical" on occasions. He wants simpler language.

S. M. A. of Manchester, England, writes to praise THE NEW MASSES and to inform us that the Manchester Theater of Action has recently given *Waiting for Lefty.*

George Blake of the Boston Committee for Equal Opportunities writes that the committee is waging a fight against school books that distort history about Negroes. One of the books about which the committee has complained is Kipling's *Captain Courageous* and he suggests that THE NEW MASSES deal with Kipling as an apologist for British imperialism.

Francis A. Henson of New York announces the publication on November 1 of a quarterly devoted to political, economic and social equality. The publication, Race, will deal with the Negro question. Genevieve Schneider is managing editor of the quarterly and editorial offices are located at 20 Vesey Street, New York.

The central dramatic group of the Associated Workers Clubs of 11 East 18th Street, New York, is seeking playwrights and actors.

The Downtown Music School, 799 Broadway, announces that it has secured the services of Hanns Eisler to give a course that will begin on Oct. 27. Lectures are designed for those with little or no musical training.

J. S. Hamilton of New York chides the reviewer of the first New Theater night for not making more allowances for "good intentions" in the dance numbers. He liked them as well as any other part of the program, he writes.

The American Friends of the Chinese People send us a resolution passed at their Oct. 9 banquet condemning Chiang Kai-shek and Premier Wang Chin-Wei for their refusal to fight against Japanese imperialism. A protest against Japan's invasion of China was also lodged.

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Shaw and Mussolini

JOSEPH FREEMAN

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW, who never misses an opportunity to settle the world's affairs, has rushed to Italy's aid at a critical moment. Mussolini ought to appreciate the playwright's apologia for the bombing of women and children in Aduwa. It is not often these days that intellectuals of Shaw's reputation openly applaud fascism. For the most part, they are its avowed enemies, if only in self-defense against a barbaric system which has declared war on reason and culture.

But Shaw's stock in trade has always been to jump harder on his fellow liberals than on the champions of imperialism. It is this trick which made him seem so revolutionary in those distant pre-war days, when to preach Ibsen and Bergson appeared to the snug middle-classes indistinguishable from slitting the king's throat. The babbits thought you were ahead of your era if you only managed to be a decade ahead of those who were a century behind it.

Last week, the Devil's Disciple gave an interview to The London Daily Mirror which the Hearst press hastened with joy to reprint on October 9. It is symptomatic of our times that the man from San Simeon and the superman from Dublin should agree on the rape of Ethiopia. In this interview Shaw said:

"All pacifists have gone stark, staring mad. Sanctions mean war and the British people won't have it. Mussolini should have been given a free hand at the start. He has taken it anyway. I am sorry for Ethiopia and its troubles, but when it comes to upholding a tribal civilization against ours, then the tribal civilization must go."

Shaw agrees with Mussolini that the best way to stop banditry is to let the bandit have his way. If a gangster shoots you in cold blood while trying to rob you, it is your own fault; you should not resist him. Give him whatever he wants; that is the only way to keep the peace. Commenting on the Italian dictator's declaration that war in Africa would be shortened and the cause of European peace aided if both Italy and Britain withdrew their warships from the Mediterranean, the Irish playwright said: "Mussolini is right. It is the only sane way out of the difficulty in which we are involved. We simply can't go to war."

Shaw did not feel that way when British imperialism was threatened. He did not advocate that the Kaiser be given a free hand in Belgium because he had taken it anyway. But he has not forgotten the tricks of the imperialist apologist. The vulgar Marxist may think Mussolini is seeking raw materials and a market in Africa. The black-shirted dictator himself does not conceal his real attitude toward his black-skinned victims. It is the attitude of a wolf toward a sheep. But then Mussolini is only a ham actor; he is not like Shaw a playwright and philosopher full of irony and pity.

"I am sorry for Ethiopia and its troubles," the eminent dramatist said and that was very decent of him. But, alas! necessity knows no law, least of all the law of pity. The war against Ethiopia is on the same lofty plane as the war against the Kaiser; it is not a war for booty, but a war for culture.

"When it comes to upholding a tribal civilization against ours"—Shaw said—"then the tribal civilization must go."

This is the irony that slays the pity as effectively as our superior civilization slays the tribes of Ethiopia. What could be more ironical than the Shavian pretense that Mussolini is defending our civilization against tribal civilization? Fascism is itself the greatest menace to all that is best in our civilization. Above all—is Africa attacking the West? Has Haile Selassie invaded Rome?

The backward races of the world—backward not through choice but through historic circumstances — will not and cannot threaten our civilization. For the most powerful reasons imaginable—*technical* reasons—they cannot be dangerous until they cease to be tribal.

The papers report that an Ethiopian chief has been shocked by the savage methods of warfare introduced by the Italians; he was indignant at the barbaric use of poison gas. The chief's naive horror reveals the technical inferiority of his civilization, but it scarcely argues the moral superiority of our own.

People with moral scruples and no poison gas cannot threaten Mr. Shaw's civilization. The Yellow Peril becomes a peril only when it ceases to be yellow and becomes bourgeois. Japan menaces the peace of the world because it is dominated by men who resemble less the members of a Mongolian tribe than the members of the British Cabinet. Ethiopia would threaten Europe only if it became like Europe—an armed camp of imperialist robbers. As long as it remains tribal, it can only be the victim of "our" civilization, gobbled up by the bourgeois states amidst the applause of the bourgeois ideologues.

The triumph of Italian arms will not mean the triumph of what is best in European civilization. It will mean the triumph of the Italian bankers and industrialists and their tyrannical state. Nor will it, as Shaw wants us to believe, prevent the next war. Manchukuo and Ethiopia will lead to the second world war as surely as the Balkans and southern Africa led to the first. In both wars, Shaw is on record as giving aid and comfort to the robber barons.

With the passage of time, Shaw's outlook on life has turned from red to white along with his beard. But his approval of Mussolini cannot be set down to mere senility. You have only to think of men like André Gide and Romain Rolland and Maxim Gorki and the late Henri Barbusse to realize that even past sixty a mind may retain its sanity provided it does not bury itself in the prejudices of the propertied classes. In urging war upon "tribal civilization," Shaw catches up with the bourgeois youth of today; he adds his bass to Oswald Mosely's contralto in a pathetic rendition of the "Giovanezza," that paean to youth which marks capitalism's old age.

Three decades ago, Chesterton called Shaw a seventeenth-century Calvinist—which is to say a seventeenth-century bourgeois. Shaw believed that the elect do not earn virtue; they possess it. In nineteenth-century jargon, this Calvinist doctrine became the Nietzschean gospel of the superman. By the twentieth century, the superman emerged as Mussolini. In applauding the Italian dictator from the beginning, Shaw was merely applauding himself at the end.

People were astonished at this. They looked upon it as another Shavian paradox. They imagined that the playwright who said, "Marx made a man of me," was actually a Marxist. But this was no paradox of Shaw's; in applauding the blackshirts Shaw was not contradicting but fulfilling himself. Years ago he had openly repudiated Marxian economics; he took his economics from Jevons, as he took his biology from Lamarck, his ethics from Nietzsche, his metaphysics from Bergson and his art from Ibsen. But Shaw is no mere plagiarist or eclectic; he is a genius whose remarkable gifts have been devoted with stern concentration to a single cause. The quintessence of Shaw is the quintessence of that section of the bourgeoisie which forty years ago was progressive. Today that bourgeoisie, fierce in its dotage, finds the quintessence of the superman in a mountebank and murderer like Mussolini.

It was not a paradox for Shaw to praise the Soviet Union in the same breath with fascist Italy. He said nothing in favor of the U.S.S.R. which has not been said by intelligent American business men. These also praise the Soviet Union for the wrong reasons. In both Italy and Russia, Shaw imagined he saw the triumph of the doctrine of the elect. For him the Soviet system meant not the victory of socialism in one country, but the victory of the superman in one other country.

These conclusions come from Shaw's rationalism which distorts reality. Approving the invasion of Ethiopia, he says all pacifists have gone stark mad; sanctions mean war and we simply cannot go to war. It is Shaw, however, who is the pacifist; he wants peace at any price, including the price of innocent blood. He is willing to pay for peace with the lives of men, women and children killed by the advanced instruments of our civilization and the lives of common

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Italian soldiers killed by the diseases of tribal civilization.

It sounds like realism, but it is only real-politic, the most short-sighted politics there is. For if you stop babbling about "our" civilization versus "tribal" civilization and realize that "our" civilization is based on the struggle for markets and colonies, you will also realize that a second world war is in the cards. It is merely a question of time before the contradictions within "our" civilization leads toward a second explosion more terrific and destructive and monstrous than the first. You may postpone it, but you cannot prevent it by giving Mussolini a "free" hand, any more than you can prevent it by giving the Japanese a "free" hand on Soviet territory.

This is precisely the kind of paradox that Shaw has never understood. An ounce of prevention may be a pound cure, but as a rule every pound of bourgeois prevention has meant an extra pound of disease. The nations arm to "prevent" the war which that very armament produces.

Certainly, giving Mussolini a "free" hand will not raise Ethiopian tribal civilization to the level of our own. It can only convert chattel into colonial slaves. Peonage will supplant the tribe and the Italian capitalists will supplant the tribal chiefs.

This may have been a progressive step in previous stages of history; today we know that for tribal civilization the path to progress lies outside the imperialist system of cannibalism. Compare the fate of the Latin American and African tribes exploited by the imperialist system with the fate of the Asiatic tribes emancipated by the Soviet system. Compare Red rubber with Red freedom. If Shaw really understood the contradictions of the capitalist system, he would understand that the most effective way of eliminating the "threat" of tribal civilization is not to enslave it to capitalism but to lift it to socialism. Mussolini wishes to civilize them with bayonets, as the Czar did in Bokhara; it is up to his Irish disciple to consider what the socialist revolution did in Bokhara.

Shaw did not hesitate to utter the fantastic dream of men becoming first supermen, then gods. Surely he can permit himself to speak of the much more plausible future when men of the tribe will leap over capitalism into socialism.

A twentieth-century poet should illuminate rather than obscure the contradiction that the best way to save our civilization is to defend at this moment the tribal civilization of Ethiopia against the piratical assault of Italian imperialism. In defending the backward races and colonies of the world against invasion, exploitation and oppression, we strike at the *foundations* of imperialism which strangles our civilization in its greedy paws; in defending Ethiopia we defend ourselves. The Mussolini who murders the unarmed people of Aduwa, crushes with equal ruthlessness the workers, farmers and intellectuals of Italy. He does both for the same purpose—to safeguard and advance the interests of finance capital. And Britain, which may or may not block Mussolini in Africa, will do whatever it will finally do with the purpose of safeguarding and advancing the interests of *its* robber barons.

To applaud Mussolini, as Shaw does, with crocodile tears for Ethiopia's troubles is to applaud the subjection of the Negro race and by implication the Mongolian and Indian races, equally enslaved by our civilization. But their masters are our masters. We are only a little above them in the elaborate hierarchy of greed and violence which marks that civilization. The same troops which shoot the men and women of Aduwa into colonial submission, shoot the men and women of Rome into wage submission. The arms which brought "our" civilization to Latin America have murdered American workers in Detroit, San Francisco and Minneapolis because they dared to ask for bread.

At this moment, it is important to stop Mussolini, but for reasons other than those which animate Downing Street or the Quai d'Orsay. The triumph of Ethiopia in this conflict means the awakening of the entire Negro race—and of all the oppressed races—to the weaknesses as well as the monstrosities of imperialism.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Sinclair Lewis—Anti-Fascist

IT CAN'T HAPPEN HERE, by Sinclair Lewis. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

IT CAN'T HAPPEN HERE is not a great novel. It is a political tract, a novel with a message, and it can no more be judged by ordinary standards than could *Looking Backward* or *The Iron Heel*. That the tract was written in the form of a novel will greatly increase its sale, but the story is to be judged only by its success in sugar-coating the pill. What really matters is the pill itself.

The novel begins in the spring of 1936, with the nomination of Buzz Windrip as the Democratic candidate for president. Competing with Windrip are Senator Trowbridge, a sober and intelligent Republican, and Franklin Roosevelt, running independently with the backing of the liberal Congressmen and Norman Thomas. Windrip is elected, and on his inauguration assumes the power of a dictator, crushing opposition with his private army of Minute Men. The usual fascist policies are adopted; the breaking of the labor unions, the suppression of criticism, the burning of books, the redistricting of the country to facilitate Windrip control and Windrip graft, the establishment of concentration camps, the persecution of minority races and the use of elaborate ballyhoo to conceal the lowering of standards of living. In 1938, Windrip is deposed by his secretary and brains, the homosexual Lee Sarason, who, in 1939, is assassinated by General Dewey Haik. A war is on with Mexico when the book ends.

All this is seen through the eyes of Doremus Jessup, a middle-aged liberal who edits a Vermont newspaper. Jessup criticizes Windrip, is arrested, paroled and forced to help the pro-Windrip editor who is put in his place. After his son-in-law is shot, he joins an underground anti-fascist organization. Finally discovered, he is sent to a concentration camp, with beatings, castor oil, bad food, vermin, filth and all the rest. His escape is maneuvered from the outside, and he goes to Canada, where he works at the headquarters of Walt Trowbridge's New Underground. After a time he is sent to the West to do active work, and we last see him making his escape from the fascists.

Although Jessup comes to life in certain episodes, it would be foolish to compare him with George Babbitt or Martin Arrowsmith or even such lesser heroes as Myron Weagle. The only thing that can or needs to be said is that he is convincing and interesting enough to hold the story together. His private life, which consists mostly of an affair with Lorinda Pike, is of no importance except as a concession to readers who want love-interest. The various characters just barely serve their functions in the tract and that is all.

The book must, then, be discussed as a piece of political writing, and it might as well be made clear here and now that Sinclair Lewis has written a courageous and tremendously useful book. If John Jones had written the novel, it would be considerably less important. But here is our illustrious Nobel Prize winner, whose poorest books cannot help selling. His tract is going to be read by tens and probably hundreds of thousands; editorials will be written about it; every women's club in the country will listen to a paper about it in the course of the winter. And whatever the novel's shortcomings, it does make two things perfectly clear: first, *fascism is entirely possible in the United States*; second, it would be damned unpleasant. Oh, I know plenty of readers will say, "But really, it *can't* happen here," but the *book is going to make quite a dent just the* same.

Because the novel is likely to raise the issue of fascism more sharply than it has ever been raised in America before, it is important to find out just how well Lewis understands the phenomenon and just how effectively he is arming people against it. First of all, he knows that fascism is related to capitalism and that is the beginning of wisdom. Secondly, he realizes that fascist demagogues rise to power on the strength of their radical promises. And finally he is fully aware that the liberal suffers as much from fascism as the Communist or Socialist.

On the other hand, it must be recorded that he seldom emphasizes the capitalist basis of fascism. Despite his occasional references to Wall Street's support of Windrip, he has not quite freed himself from the notion that fascism is directly caused by the gullibility of the masses and the knavishness and sadism of its leaders. This is particularly apparent in his account of the beginnings of Windrip's regime. He gives no reason for the emergence of fascism at just that moment. There is no explanation of why Roosevelt has failed, no indication of working-class militancy of the kind that Wall Street would want a fascist to crush, no discussion whatever of the economic condition of the country.

In the second place, the scope of the book seems needlessly limited. Lewis says nothing, for example, about the international reverberations of fascism in the United States, beyond his references to its extreme nationalism and its war with Mexico. More striking is his failure to give the reader more than a sketchy idea of what is happening throughout the country as a whole. His choosing a corner of Vermont as his locale was wise, for it enables him to show how fascism strikes at the most secluded spots, but he pays too much attention to Fort Beulah to do what he really wants to do.

Thirdly, Lewis' liberalism, though genuine enough and in a way admirable, does not conduce to intellectual clarity. This is a tract, remember, and a tract that is intended to get results. What, then, is one supposed to do to prevent fascism? Lewis does not know. The only time he copes with the problem is when Jessup reflects: "The tyranny of this dictatorship isn't primarily the fault of Big Business, nor of the demagogues who do their dirty work. It's the fault of Doremus Jessup! Of all the conscientious, respectable, lazy-minded Doremus Jessups who have let the demagogues wriggle in, without fierce enough protest." It sounds a little like a civil-service reformer: don't let the rascals get into power; keep good men in office. Practically speaking, indeed, the moral seems to be that one should vote for Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936.

The same confusion appears when the question is raised of what, supposing Jessup's counter-revolution is successful, will take the place of fascism. It will be recalled that the leader of the counter-revolution is Walt Trowbridge, last Republican candidate for president. Jessup is "content to know that, whatever happened, Trowbridge and the other authentic leaders would never go back to satisfaction in government of the profits, by the profits, for the profits." Trowbridge talks about "a new feeling" and "a universal partnership," and Jessup—and Lewis—are content.

Lewis makes no pretense, of course, of being anything but a liberal, but it can scarcely be said that his case for liberalism is convincing. The whole book demonstrates the helplessness of the liberal in the face of capitalist terror. Jessup himself, though he disapproves of violence, is forced to resort to it. He refuses to accept the view that Communism is the only alternative to fascism, but he has nothing convincing to propose.

It is obvious throughout that Lewis is terribly afraid the Communists may be right, for he cracks at them on every possible occasion. They are "Puritanical, hortatory and futile"; they are dogmatists; Russia is their Holy Land; they refuse to make a united front with Franklin Roosevelt; they are theocratic, intense and narrow. The one Communist who plays much of a part in the book illustrates all this by regarding his fellow-prisoners as comrades "only if they were

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saved, baptized Communists." There is another Communist, who is a pretty decent fellow, but he is expelled from the party for saying that the revolution ought not to be run from Moscow.

It is difficult not to feel that, so far as Communism is concerned, Sinclair Lewis is both worried and ignorant. His ignorance is inexcusable; there are plenty of Communists not so very far from his Vermont home who are living demonstrations of the falsity of most of his ideas. His worry is more understandable, but, I think, a little excessive. He feels that the Communists are putting up a pretty good fight against fascism, but he refuses to ally himself with them. We can assure him that, despite all his fears about dogmatism, the Communists will welcome him—do, in fact, welcome him right now for the fight against fascism he has made in this book. We can also assure him that he need not be afraid of the results of the alliance. We only ask him to go as far as his strong and fine hatred of fascism carries him. If we are wrong in holding that Communism is the only alternative to fascism, he has nothing to lose, for history will go his way and not ours. If, on the other hand, we are right, and he has got to choose between what he regards as two evils, it ought not to be hard to determine what is, for him, on any ground, the lesser of the two.

This is a political review of a political book, and the upshot of it is that Lewis has done a magnificent job so far as warning his readers against fascism is concerned, but that he has not understood fascism well enough to be able to show how to fight against it. But there is one literary comment that ought to be made. If it is not a great novel, it is a very significant phenomenon in the career of a highly important novelist. After a good deal of inglorious wobbling, Lewis has discovered the great issue of his day and he has not been afraid to tackle it. The effect on his future writing should be tremendous. Lewis is looking at America with new eyes. Instead of third-rate stuff like *Ann Vickers* and *Work of Art*, he ought to give us the kind of book that *Babbitt* promised, a book alive with understanding, warm with sympathy, a full, rich, honest, courageous book. If *It Can't Happen Here* is an event in American politics, that would be an event in American literature.

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Let My People Go!

BLACK RECONSTRUCTION: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880. W. E. Burghardt Du Bois. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $4.50.

W. E. B. DU BOIS has always been a devout believer in the doctrine of the natural rights of man. Out of that belief came the inspiration that led to the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People with its civil libertarianism and its tenacious struggle, on a purely legal plane, for democratic rights for the Negro people. One of the ideals of democracy is that the right to participate in civic affairs shall be extended to all men who are qualified to perform their duties and shoulder their obligations. Du Bois has consistently urged Negroes to prepare themselves to exercise the rights they ought to have by accumulating at least a minimum of property and securing an education. Those who did he dubbed the Talented Tenth and it was for them that he waged his most vigorous battles. But conformity to supposed civic standards has not brought acceptance; Negroes are still denied civil rights.

Du Bois has not remained altogether blind to these stubborn facts. Last year he resigned from the N.A.A.C.P. and advised Negroes to abandon their frontal attack on discrimination and denial of civil rights. He now counsels a retreat into the ghetto and dreams of a shopkeeper's paradise where the Talented Tenth can gain economic strength enough to enforce a demand for full participation in American life. Coincidentally, he has come to see that there must be reforms in the American economic set-up to afford these prepared people adequate opportunities. It is in the latter respect that he regards himself as a Marxian.

It was against this background that he wrote *Black Reconstruction.* The book is an eloquent presentation of the case against those who, paying lip service to democracy, exclude the Negro from the democratic system. Du Bois is at his angry best in refuting apologists who falsify Civil War and Reconstruction history in order to bolster up preconceived beliefs that Negroes are unfit for full citizenship. He piles up facts to prove that Negro soldiers played an important part in winning the war and that reconstruction governments were not orgies of waste and graft. Not only did Negro soldiers fight bravely in the northern armies, but their desertion of the plantations crippled the Confederacy by cutting off its supplies. And, as Du Bois points out, reconstruction governments were progressive: they gave the South its first system of free schools, extended suffrage rights and wiped many old feudal laws off the statute books. There was graft, of course, but it was of the same kind that existed in Grant's cabinet and with as little racial basis.

The demand of former slaves for "forty acres and a mule" has been hooted at for fifty years as an example of Negro cupidity while the defeat of the movement for confiscation of the land and the consequent overthrow of reconstruction governments is depicted as an heroic episode and a triumph for all that was finest in southern civilization. Du Bois is quite right in pointing out that only possession of the land could have guaranteed Negroes their political rights and he is equally correct in asserting that the return of the former slave-holders to power was a set-back for democracy.

But Du Bois' history is altogether unconvincing in his interpretation of these events because of his attempt to fit them into a superficial Marxian mold. Thus he calls the slaves' desertions of the plantations a "general strike." Obviously it was nothing of the kind unless the term "strike" is to be deprived of all meaning. Pursuing the same thought he calls reconstruction governments "labor governments" and explains in a footnote that he regards them as dictatorships of the proletariat. Precisely because they were not, they have Du Bois' hearty approval. Their emphasis, like his, was on rights for the small property holder. The reforms they essayed, like those Du Bois dreams of today, stemmed from Jefferson and not from Marx.

No historian can afford to neglect what Karl Marx knew when he rallied English workingmen to support the North: that the Civil War was a progressive struggle against an outworn feudal system. But the war between the states was not a working-class revolution nor did reconstruction governments contemplate fundamental changes in property relationships. These facts elude Du Bois and lead him to speak of the landlords' return to power as a counter-revolution of property. Negroes were not seeking to estab-

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superficial examination of the speeches and writings of Negro leaders of the time who at best hoped to lay the basis for the rise of capitalists of their own group. The crowning absurdity of Du Bois' point of view may be seen in the fact that the reconstruction governments had the support of men like Charles Sumner and Thaddeus Stevens, leaders of the "radical" Republicans who can hardly be said to have wanted more than an eradication of the worst abuses of capitalism. For a short while Sumner and Stevens even had the support of the majority of northern capitalists and lost it only when the industrialists, harried by the Greenbackers and agrarians in the West, made peace with their erstwhile southern enemies in order to hasten pacification of the country and restoration of internal markets.

Black Reconstruction is valuable as a source book for dates and figures but Du Bois' confusion destroys its utility for wider use. He has an abiding distrust of the working class and his bias runs all through his book. For example, he can see clearly enough that the rise of slavery and the failure of the reconstruction governments redounded to the benefit of capitalists but he insists on blaming white workers for the plight of Negroes. Thus he argues that the colored workers of the world as "the majority of the world's laborers, by the insistence of white labor, became the basis of a system of industry which ruined democracy and showed its perfect fruit in World War and Depression." The emphasis is misplaced; the systems of world imperialism and slavery were not established by the *insistence of white labor* but rather by the insistence of white capitalists able to bribe and mislead a then undeveloped working class. In a similar vein Du Bois puts a large share of the blame for post-war violence on the disappearance of the old planter class which, he says, "explains so many characteristics of the post-war South: its lynchings and mob law, its murder and cruelty, its insensibility to the finer things of civilization."

That same distrust underlies Du Bois' hostility to working-class movements and his advice to Negroes to "accept segregation." It leads him to support the New Deal as he once supported the New Freedom. At a time when the masses of Negroes need more than ever to throw their support behind movements for real labor governments and genuine dictatorships of the proletariat Du Bois can only yearn for a limited bourgeois democracy that will give him and his beloved Talented Tenth a place in the sun.

LOREN MILLER.

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Two Escapes

LETTERS OF GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS. Edited by C. Colleer Abott. 2 vols. Oxford University Press. $10.

THE EARLY LETTERS OF WILLIAM AND DOROTHY WORDSWORTH. Edited by Ernest De Selincourt. Oxford University Press. $8.75.

THE poet as a person and the poet as a craftsman will be of secondary consideration in this review, although the first is Wordsworth's chief preoccupation and the second is the chief matter of Hopkins' letters.

Wordsworth, with the self-consciousness of the introvert, strove to live the "good life," to be irreproachable, and scarcely after his thirties lived at all. A more unlovely exhibition of constipated emotions, dosed constantly with extracts in capital letters, it would be hard to find anywhere in literature. The good of humanity was regularly in his mouth but never got further. In important decisions personal salvation and a selfish independence came before and his retirement to the lake country is one of the most thorough escapes in the history of literature.

Hopkins, on the contrary, was a man of rigidly objective mind. To him selflessness was natural, as it is to men who look upon their careers as well as their bodies as instruments to satisfy some larger curiosity or fulfil some larger purpose than the boundaries of one life can contain. He entered the Catholic Church seeking, not salvation, which a more egotistic nature might have found, but solutions which he could not find there. The course was a hard one. It involved two successive intellectual and emotional crises, renunciation of one religious faith and initiation into another. But he is quiet about both his motives and his experience, the rack of which can be felt, however, in the calm, mask-like style. A powerful and independent will and keenly-inquiring mind, bowed in Jesuit discipline, leaped out through the one permitted outlet, literary technique; and so this obedient Jesuit became perhaps the boldest and most deliberate experimenter in the history of poetry.

Wordsworth and Hopkins appear here together not accidentally as poets whose letters happen to be published in the same year, nor as men who either by literary or temperamental affinities belong together. As already mentioned, there were scarcely two men further apart and their poetry is even more opposed. Both, however, viewed a revolution and reacted to it; both were distressed by the visible miseries of the system they lived in; both retreated from it; and for both the retreat appears to have been a disaster. These considerations, therefore, make their correspondence, or at least chosen elements in it, important to contemporary writers.

Curiously enough the period spent by Wordsworth in revolutionary France brought no comment beyond references to "disturbed conditions" and inconveniences. Perhaps he was too absorbed in his famous love affair. It is not until he returned to England that we find the revolution to have made any impression upon him. In those early years of his manhood Wordsworth was moody, restless, unsettled and depressed by his insecure future. He wandered about in England and on the continent. His correspondents of the time were, like himself, young men not yet snugly fitted in business, church or official posts. Their impatience burst out in democratic sentiments, which disappeared when posts appeared. One by one, as they settled down in church livings, business or public office these democrats turned conservatives. Wordsworth, left a considerable legacy by a friend, went into literary retirement. Such agitation of soul as the times stirred in him was for the class with which he identified himself, the class of small landholders. He speaks of it several times in the letters. In one place he writes: "In the last poem of my second volume, I have attempted to give a picture of a man of strong and lively sensibility actuated by two of the most powerful affections of the human heart, the parental affection and the love of property, *landed* property, [italics Wordsworth's], including the feelings of inheritance, home and personal and family independence. This poem has, I know, drawn tears from the eyes of more than one—persons well acquainted with the manners of the statesmen as they are called, of this country. . . . But nevertheless, I am anxious to know the effect of this poem upon you, on many accounts; because you are yourself the inheritor of an estate which has long been in possession of your family and above all because you are so well acquainted, nay, so familiarly conversant with the language, manners and feeling of the middle order of people who dwell in the country."

What alarmed Wordsworth most, in the change to capitalist industry was its pressure upon the small landholders. Imported foodstuffs were destroying their economic base. The poverty of the already poor he treated in vague sentiments; but the impoverishment of his own class moved him desperately. It is further reflected, in a more diffused way, in the general melancholy of his poetry and in the deepening nationalism of his scenic poems. It was the beauty of *English* land that he was celebrating, adding a patriotic note to his plaint against the industrialism that was defacing and depreciating the English land and turning out its "owners."

Seventy years later another young poet was reading accounts of the rise of the Paris Commune. We see at once, a firm, clear, unsentimental, objective mind:

> I must tell you I am always thinking of the Communist future. . . . I am afraid some great revolution is not far off. Horrible to say, in a manner I am a Communist. Their ideal bating

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> some things is nobler than that professed by any secular statesman I know of (I must own I live in bat-light and shoot at a venture). Besides it is just—I do not mean the means of getting to it are. But it is a dreadful thing for the greatest and most necessary part of a very rich nation to live a hard life without dignity, knowledge, comforts, delight, or hopes in the midst of plenty—which plenty they make. They profess that they do not care what they wreck and burn, the old civilization and order must be destroyed. This is a dreadful lookout but what has the old civilization done for them? As it at present stands in England it is itself in great measure founded on wrecking. But they got none of the spoils, they came in for nothing but harm from it then and thereafter. England has grown hugely wealthy, but this wealth has not reached the working class; I expect it has made their condition worse. Besides this iniquitous order the old civilization embodies another order mostly old and what is new in direct entail from the old, the old religion, learning, law, art, etc., and all the history that is preserved in standing monuments. But as the working classes have not been educated they know next to nothing of all this and cannot be expected to care if they destroy it. The more I look the more black and deservedly black the future looks, so I will write no more.

Elsewhere in Hopkins' letters are other indications that he felt the essential *disorder* of the capitalist world in which he lived. He turned, as a number of modern poets have done, to what seemed an oasis of order, the church. He destroyed his poems on entering the Jesuit order and willingly made other personal sacrifices in submitting to its discipline. He only began to write again when he was invited to do so by his superiors. Then the creativeness and independence of his nature poured itself out through that outlet. It became an escape from his escape. What Hopkins might have done today, with a new order before him in Russia and a disciplined revolutionary party at hand, as an instrument for extending that order throughout the world, one can only speculate. But the characteristics of his mind are such that we might presume, at least, the possibility that he would have turned to the revolutionary movement. Objective, realistic, uncompromising minds like his are most frequently found in revolutionary circles.

What were the outcomes of these escapes?

Even admirers of Wordsworth's poetry speak of its drop in vigor and beauty after his thirties. There were no clear reasons for it. He was in comfortable circumstances, growing in prestige, living a life of his own choice. Circumstances could not be better contrived for literary production; yet it fell off, continually. A number of explanations have been offered. I add my own.

Wordsworth's poems are almost all autobiographical. Even the lyrics are descriptions of direct personal impressions. The pronoun I is to be found in almost all of them. The long poems, like "The Prelude" and "The Excursion," are the work of a man so smugly certain of the value of his life and the rightness of his feelings that he presumes to build a philosophy upon them. For material he falls back upon the years before his retirement, the years when his life had been, by comparison, an active one. When that material is used up the poetry grows noticeably emptier and duller. Obviously, then, his escape was into a vacuum and was infertile. He had leisure and peace of mind, but lacking active participation in the life of his time they were useless advantages. Life had been the source of his poetry and in parting from one he parted unknowingly from the other.

Moreover, the retirement proved to be an unhealthy place. It may be that he was actually an ailing man, but even sick men when they are writing satisfactorily do not complain so much. The letters carry frequent references to illness. His sister Dorothy's more vital and more entertaining letters, speak frequently of the pains in his side and his upset stomach, when he sat down to write. Sucking the spent vein gave pain. From contemporary writers who have similarly attempted to write from one refuge or another, we have heard similar groaning.

Hopkins' letters, despite their different preoccupations, reveal similar though more tragic suffering. Hopkins, far from receiving any honors died without seeing book or even substantial magazine publication. He had to endure misunderstanding criticism from his best friends. As time went his isolation grew and with it dullness. Uncomplaining references to apathy and lack of energy grow in number. It is known that he died of anemia in his forties and it may be that his miseries had an entirely physical origin. On the other hand, the psychological roots of disease are well known; and there have been enough cheerful invalids to make it clear that melancholia usually has other sources—frustrations and blocks. A psychiatrist reading Hopkins' letters would probably diagnose a nervous breakdown; and it is clear that for such a breakdown the isolation of his refuge must have been a major cause.

Can a writer then safely withdraw from life, to cultivate his talent? These two historic examples are witnesses to the contrary. In the disturbed world of today vigor and a sort of gaiety are with those standing in the midst of the current. The cries of despair come from those in the treetops.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Within Such Walls

I HAD ILLUSIONS, by Beth McHenry. The Henkle Company. $2.50

THE story of a great hospital is one that had to be told. Lives within such walls are vital, because of their very proximity to death. It is this ever-present closeness of death here, which gives to each life a naturally dramatic importance.

In *I Had Illusions* Beth McHenry simply tries to tell of the human beings, the patients and nurses, superintendants and doctors, whose lives are vitally affected, spent or lost, in a large San Francisco hospital. Through it all we are constantly aware of the youthful student-nurse, captured by the ballyhoo of Florence Nightingale idealism.

This is not a muckraking book, though one such would fill another real need. Hospitals, posing as public benefactors, are the cruelest exploiters of the young skilled workers who like to be known as professionals, the nurses and internes. In turn, the callousness and discrimination of these great, well-organized rackets, against the sick and injured who are unable to pay exacting rates, can hardly be compensated for by the scanty well meaning of a few doctors and nurses.

The cold cynicism of the hospital gradually batters down and permeates the attitude of the novitiate. When Beth McHenry first enters, she takes her free time to look up the story of the man who later became the skeleton used in classes. He is one of the most vivid of her people.

Toward the end of her book, she thinks more and more of herself in the role of writer and, consequently, writes more of her own feelings and reactions instead of making us feel the people and events she describes.

There is one long chapter about an established and well-known writer who advises and encourages her. It is from him, too, that she has gained a facile style and learned unworthy, too-easy tricks along with other lessons. There is the feeling that she has yet, in this book, to find her own pace. The imitation writing which sometimes creeps into this story should be left to those who have nothing to say. Beth McHenry's material and her own potentialities, deserve the best.

Garr, the one who knew what she wanted and had the way irrevocably cut off; little Freddie, the tiny newsboy who lay wasting away; the venereal quack; the anaesthetist with his frustrated love for surgery and his vicarious gas-fed peace; the proud unmarried mother finally defeated by poverty; these people remain with me from the book. These and the feeling that what might have been the greatest of them somehow failed to live—the story of Mother Mooney. This is because the author says what she believes—what we all believe—ought to be said, but the book fails to make the story say it.

I closed the book with the feeling that, while there are chapters which stand out, we have been given a sight of material which is so powerful it deserves to make us weep and clench our fists. Somehow, it doesn't quite do this.

"The real beginning remained ahead," Beth McHenry writes as the last line in this, her first book. Since she left the hospital, stripped of many illusions, she has worked among other people, has done other things, which surely deserve to be told. Unless I am mistaken, her next book should bring those hot tears and should clench our fists for us.

BORIS ISRAEL.

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Music

"Useful" Music

OF WHAT use is music? To an enlightened society nothing is acceptable to it unless it has some real element of use. This usefulness does not need to be physical in an exterior sense. It may be psychological, emotional, intellectual, etc. But usefulness must be clear and provable. Vague likes and dislikes are not enough to warrant retention of former art values.

No one finds it pleasant to give up art experiences to which he has grown attached through association. In music especially there is a great tendency for the auditor to limit his musical experience to the pleasures of a mild jag, vaguely sexual, thoroughly sentimental; enjoyable through no value or meaning inherent in the music but because of association.

The unthinking music-lover's position may be summed up quite simply. He obtains pleasure from music that he likes. He likes best certain pieces of music that he has heard before, has built up a sentimental association with and therefore wishes to hear again. He likes best in unfamiliar or new music that which reminds him the most of the music with which he has already built up an association. His acceptance of an unfamiliar work therefore inevitably means that it is constructed out of musical materials already familiar to him.

The music-lover of course does not analyze all this. He may not know why he clings to certain music and loves it. He does not reason very far as to what its influence on him is. But on consideration, we find that when music is taken in the way described above, it is a very unhealthy form of dissipation. Why? Because the music is being used exclusively to create a mood of sentimental enjoyment; because it acts as a sedative; a mild drug, dulling instead of making more keen the listener's reaction to surroundings and conditions. Because it tends through memories awakened by association to throw the listener back into his own past; because musical compositions which are most enjoyed by such listeners belong to another age (they are either written in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, or are imitations of the music written then) and tend to throw them into the psychology of a former age, dulling their awareness to the vital developments of today.

The concerts being given during the week are supposed by convention to be the vital points that should occupy the music reviewer of a weekly and should be the most up to date musical happenings of which to write. In the past week, from the important music halls of New York, Carnegie and Town Hall, we received tickets for the following events: The Chicago A Capella Choir; Lola Monti-Gorsey, soprano; Jeno Swislowski, pianist; Georges Miquelle, 'cellist. One has little doubt that the performances will be adequate, if not excellent. But of what use are these concerts? What will be their influence on those who attend them? We can get a good idea by analyzing the programs. After all, in the final reckoning it is the music even more than the playing of it that counts. On these four programs there are performed altogether forty-five pieces of music. Of these, six were written in the eighteenth century or earlier, eighteen were written in the nineteenth century, five are folk songs spoiled by unappropriate sugary chords added by tasteless collectors. The rest have been written in this century—sixteen out of forty-five. And of those sixteen we find that twelve are by men who imitate the style of the past. Of the four remaining, there are two works by Debussy in the mystical style fashionable in the beginning of the nineteen hundreds, one by his imitator Ravel and one little song by Prokofieff in his semi-twentieth-century vein.

Can music be put to some different use? Yes, of course. The use of music, aside from pure aesthetic enjoyment, consists either in creating a feeling of unity and solidarity among a group which would otherwise be less emotionally bound together, or in stirring individuals or groups to action. The early church used music to bind by feeling stragglers who were only vaguely of the same group. After singing the same hymns or chants together, union of faith was attained. Armies use music, even today, to incite to war soldiers who might without its influence think too many clear thoughts about the meaning of the battle; but the spell of military rhythm suggests unquestioning obedience. It is a simple matter to turn music into a stimulator of war-fever at this very time of war-crisis—today.

Now the music written today is of many kinds. Some of it is so spineless as to be of no apparent import although it is really negative. Some modern music leans over backwards and reverts to the classic or romantic. Some is mystical and takes the mind of the listener into an unreal realm, where he forgets his real problems. Some is of "ivory tower" species, complex and of purely intellectual value, or only for highly-trained men to appreciate. Some which is nameless and instrumental; some is written definitely for workers' groups; there are some mass songs. Obviously these are not all of equal value. Some are experiments which will fail. Some will last. Some produces at first an unpleasant reaction. It isn't pretty. Neither is the condition of which it sings. If one out of a hundred examples of this new music proves to be of lasting or even of immediate value, it is more important and interesting to listen to the whole hundred, searching for the one best, than it is to attend concerts which, dealing with a form of music impossible to relate to our life today, produces a mental and physical lethargy.

It is refreshing to turn to the adventuresome use to which music may be put for a definite purpose.

During the longshoremen's strike in San Francisco a young composer, Eric Clayton, wandered down to the waterfront. There were little scattered bunches of pickets. There were too few to cover the entire waterfront and they were knotted into little unconnected groups. They had been stand-

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ing there a long time and the morale was not very strong. Police were waiting to bring scabs through. It would have been easy. There was an inactive crowd of curious spectators, numbering many hundreds, perhaps thousands. Clayton did not have any song in mind that would fit. But he went to one of the little picket groups and after gaining its confidence by a few words, he persuaded the members to try starting a song, although none of them had ever done anything of the sort. Clayton had to make up the song as he went along, words and music. He hummed a tune, then sang it over, thought of words for it. He taught the tune by singing it over and over. (No one knew that it was being improvised.) It grew and took form. It was simple but original. It was vital to the point of electrifying those who sang it. As soon as it was learned, one of the pickets of the first group went over and taught it to the second group; in this way it spread all up and down the line. It changed the pickets from stragglers to a solidified single unit, strengthened their purpose. The crowd was also swayed. It changed from curiosity seekers to sympathizers. It took up the song. The crowd bunched together and formed a solid phalanx. The police would have had to bring the scabs through the crowd, even before meeting the pickets. It would have been so bloody that they were afraid to try it.

And they didn't bring the scabs in.

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HENRY COWELL.

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The Theater

A Letter to the Author of "Squaring the Circle"

Dear Comrade Valentine Katayev:

I am writing to you about *Squaring the Circle,* which as you know is now running at the Lyceum Theater. Your play has already ignited a critical explosion. But this can hardly surprise you because you've visited Broadway—you know its patrons and purveyors. And you realize what a dangerously delicate thing your comedy of self-criticism can be. You may want to know if New York is chuckling over the "Soviet *Abie's Irish Rose,*" but as a leading Soviet artist you will surely be more interested in the degree of truthfulness with which your picture of Soviet life has been reproduced for American audiences. I cannot mention one of these matters without the other for in a play of such hair-trigger balance the art and politics are one. As a matter of fact, the play itself is less important than the problem it has suddenly uncovered. Believe me when I say that in this fact lies a burning moral not only for you but for all Soviet writers who dispatch their works to America.

The present production was not my first acquaintance with your play. Two years ago I saw it given in a tiny theater in Vermont. The audience consisted almost wholly of farmers, small trades-people, mechanics and a share of vacationists from nearby towns. Obviously these people weren't quite familiar with Soviet themes, nor your frequent references to dialectical materialism and party organization. I doubt if more than a handful knew the meaning of "Octobrist." But I am certain from words I exchanged with them and the general quality of audience-response that everyone left the theater warmly persuaded to your story and more than sympathetic to your characters.

No such thing happened on Broadway. When the curtain fell on the second-night performance a peculiar applause clattered through the house. There was steady hand-clapping punctuated with laughter, but that was not all. The peculiar loudness grew out of hisses and boos from all corners of the theater. For a moment it developed into a competition between the yeas and the nays; but if I had had any doubt as to the cause of the turmoil it was cancelled when I heard a group giddily chorusing: "I always said the Reds have ruined Russia."

I was on the point of cabling, urging you to stop the production on the grounds of its anti-Soviet slander, of the subtle way in which your intention had been poisonously perverted. The play you had written was a bubbling caricature of a pair of Soviet newlyweds compelled by the 1927 housing shortage to live in the same room. If the couples were temperamentally destined to exchange mates, the process provided the stuff for what we call, to paraphrase a cliche, "good, clean, revolutionary fun." If Tonya, "head of Communist Youth and member of five committees" and her husband Abram and the student architect Vasya are all absurdly sectarian, theirs is nevertheless a lovable foolishness. And if Ludmilla, "non-partisan," is a shrewdly female, little bourgeoise with a peanut brain, there is every indication that in time she will be "developed." It was a masterly device you used to resolve these lyrical mismatings, for when the District Organizer arrives on the scene to set both households in order one feels that a mellow intelligence has suddenly entered the room—a warm wisdom that will guide and deepen these four young lives....

But this was not the play mounted at the Lyceum two weeks ago. Your Abram's incurable tape-worm suddenly became a testimonial to Hearst's famous, everlasting Soviet food shortage. The historical setting of the action, 1927, magically jumped to 1935. You will be interested to learn that your Vasya, preciously guarding a match, observes: "Comes another Five-Year Plan and I'll have another match," although when you wrote the play there had not been even a first Five-Year Plan. But the finale would have surprised you even more. In the midst of the cacophonic celebration (which ends your script), the director introduced a young Octobrist. "There," says the District Organizer, "is the future," pointing to as dwarfed and repulsive a "child" as ever walked the stage. "Tell us, will you go on marching and building or will you destroy it all?" The lights dim; it is all mysterious; and the symbol of the future (a stage midget, in grotesque posture, his back to the audience) remains in portentous silence as the curtain falls.

A moment later I read in the "Producer's Note" that these additions which "in no case alter the political viewpoint of the original" were made with full *"consent of the translators."* Then I read the names of the translators — Eugene Lyons, Charles Malamuth—and everything *seemed* suddenly clear. For Lyons is well known here as one of the foremost slanderers of the U.S.S.R., which is no mean accomplishment in a highly competitive—and lucrative—field. Among his chief chicaneries is the "Great Russian Famine," which has provided him an income amazing for one who rose from the meager ranks of labor publicist, Daily Worker columnist, etc. Lyons became United Press correspondent in Moscow where, as Michael Gold points out, he "speculated in dollars and rubles on the illegal exchange and was warned by Soviet officials." One of his satellites is Malamuth, later inflated to full starhood when he took Lyons' place in the So-

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viet Union as the United Press correspondent.

Thus there seemed sufficient reason for Michael Gold, in an eloquent comment in The Daily Worker to blame the translators for the slanderous effect of the Broadway production. But no sooner had this appeared than Dmitri Ostrov, the director, explained that all interpolations were his own; that he was, moreover, dismayed by the boos and hisses; that Philadelphia Communists had cheered the play; that he wished to go on record as entirely sympathetic to the U.S.S.R. And any constructive suggestions would be "more than welcomed."

Certain parts of his adaptation were inexplicable except in such sympathetic terms. Ostrov had written into your script a thrilling march scene that flows toward a flawless climax out of casual chatter about food between non-partisan Ludmilla and gluttonous Abram. He tells her of the countries where fruit is shoveled into the sea and where wheat is burned while the workers starve. "If I were only really nourished for a week, *then* I could march," he muses while the radio gradually grows louder. All at once they are quickened by the martial music; in an instant they have seized the flag, locked arms and are marching across the room, shouting to the beat of *Smelo Tovarisch,* Lenin's favorite march:

> Over one land and two lands and three lands and four lands
> Where fruit falls into the sea,
> Where wheat burns up in the fields,
> One million, two million, three million, four million,
> We'd march, we'd march, we'd march. . . .

There were a few other interpolations in the spirit of your play. But Ostrov's sympathetic intentions could have only academic interest so long as the total perverse effect remained.

And then something extraordinary happened—something fortunate for you and your play. Ostrov revised his production, so much so that its quality has actually been changed. To describe the alterations would be as arduous as to track down the causes of its previous falsification. But such intangibles as the spirit of the acting, the positiveness or equivocation in pronouncing the lines, the facial expressions conveying cynicism or belief, the very tempo of the body movements—you realize how these factors can tip the balance of *Squaring the Circle* in one direction or the other. Therefore when I tell you that the actors now flood the play with a communicative warmth you will understand the substance of the change. But don't imagine that there still isn't room for misunderstanding. The play is now dated as 1927, but the senseless anachronism about the Five-Year Plan ("Broadway bait," is the explanation) remains. The blubbering, grotesque dwarf of the finale has been replaced by a bright-faced youngster who makes a sturdy "symbol of the future." He doesn't pronounce an obvious "Yes" when he is asked if he will carry on socialist construction: his reply is a full, lucent smile—but his stage-position is such that a third of the house cannot see his face, and for this third the finale retains its equivocation. . . .

If this sounds to you like quibbling over details, I can only answer that your play makes this necessary by virtue of its minute structural balance. What kind of people do you show us in your cross-section of Soviet life? Three young Communists silly with sectarianism, a "poet of the masses" who is a pompous nincompoop, a seductive feather-brained petite bourgeoise and one or two shrill leftists. To balance these negatives stands a lone District Organizer who must communicate a prodigious quantity of good sense and human feeling—or else your play topples on its nose and wallows in bathetic farce. It is a rare skill indeed that can maintain this balance. But I don't wish to imply that your play should not have been staged. We have been acquainted in this country with such sectarian foolishness as you have portrayed and with such poets of the masses. But the contemporary value of *Squaring the Circle* lies in our willingness to laugh at "our own" foibles, for our ability to do this bespeaks the maturity of a social movement secure in its strength and unafraid.

The political value of such self-criticism is quite negligible: these satirized people belong to our past just as they do to the Soviet Union's. But what are such characterizations to a heterogeneous 1935 American audience that comes to see Soviet life as portrayed in the most popular and therefore dependably truthful Soviet play? Is warped personality the *type* or the exception under the proletarian dictatorship? Is the single positive character, the District Organizer, symbol of Communist leadership, fully capable of resolving all such problems as arise under this new, uncharted system of human living?

I have said before that the balance necessary to save your play from bathos demands exquisite artistry. It requires something more: it presupposes whole-hearted sympathy with your point of view—with the collectivist philosophy of which your work is one part.

And this brings us to the core of the problem. What person or groups of persons will you entrust with the enormous responsibility of reproducing your picture of Soviet life before strange eyes? What persons dare you entrust—what persons can you entrust with a propaganda weapon that can be almost effortlessly turned against you? Will you give it to the Lyons', the Malamuths the Ostrovs, who, if they choose, might cancel your meaning and quietly distil from your bubbling quips an insidious anti-Soviet poison? Whether or not the improved version of your play deserves mild or hearty endorsement is a tiny question indeed compared with this major problem confronting every Soviet artist who sends his works to America. Your Broadway production as it now stands should delight friends of the U.S.S.R.; it should arouse, for the most part, a genuine warm sympathy among the "neutrals," but it offers a great deal for Red-baiters to cackle over and use with joy. I shudder to think what would have happened if, for instance, William Randolph Hearst or some wealthy Liberty Leaguer had decided to embark on a theater venture out of a sudden love for art and politics. What a field-day of Red-baiting he could have had with your play. What a noisome slur against the U.S.S.R. he could have spread in your name. And what an obstacle would have been placed before those tens of thousands of Americans who are toiling to recruit sympathy and friendship for the Soviet Union!

The Soviet artist has an international responsibility which extends far beyond the borders of the U.S.S.R. What he says and how he says it are of immediate concern to the revolutionary vanguard in every country. He cannot expose himself and the Soviet Union even to such mild distortion as your work suffers even in its improved version, where compromises abound—where, for example, it is justified as expedient to retain the anachronistic innuendoes about the Five-Year Plan and the food-shortage, and such a line as "I'd like to feed my Communist soul in a bourgeois swamp." The Soviet playwright can entrust his work to Tom, Dick or Harry and run the risk of anything from opportunism to forthright Hearstian perversion. Or he can entrust it to a politically responsible group who can assure him deep and impassioned understanding . . . and a limitless audience—one not limited only to proletarians but embracing the swelling numbers of middle-class people who are demanding of the theater fresh, real and fearless themes.

STANLEY BURNSHAW.

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The Wails of St. Mary's

ROBERT FORSYTHE

AT A TIME when recovery is so fully advanced that it is only a question of days until the unemployed can be taken off relief roles and allowed to starve without governmental interference, a news dispatch from California appeared in the papers last week and halted the joy of the more thoughtful. It was a story having to do with the action of the bankers in foreclosing upon the football stadium of St. Mary's College at Moraga. If this had come in the middle of the summer, it might have been received as an instance of the harm to be expected when the Christian Brothers left their posts of prayer for the usual seashore holidays, but it fell as a ponderous weight in the middle of a football season which, like all football seasons, was being the greatest in history.

The fact that St. Mary's was so definitely a football college that the institution was practically living on the proceeds from the games of the Galloping Gaels makes the action of the banking gentlemen rather obscenely mercenary, but it is not an isolated case and the greatest fears will come from those who will regard the St. Mary's example as an excellent precedent and begin asking for an accounting. As anyone with half an eye can see, football is big business. St. Mary's was a little sleepy college in Oakland, run by the Christian Brothers as a sort of modest filling station of jesuitical nonsense, when a gentleman by the name of Slip Madigan from Notre Dame appeared. The year previously the St. Mary's team had been beaten by California, 128—0. Because of this it would require a reader of exceptional innocence to believe that Mr. Madigan appeared out of the night as a simple Christian rescuer. I am not aware of the facts in this particular case, but I am aware of college football and the further circumstance that California was only able to defeat St. Mary's next season by a score of 21—0 is an indication to me that Mr. Madigan arrived with a host of Christians masquerading as halfbacks and at the invitation of sundry lay-gentlemen of the region who were being assessed for the purpose. It was either this or a miracle. I should be happy to believe in the original miracle of Mr. Slip Madigan, but logically it is not possible to believe in it without reaching the corrollary conclusion that the Christian Brothers must be in very bad odor with God now for Him to have turned them over to the mercies of the bankers.

In any event, from being a minor college on the outskirts of Oakland, St. Mary's was able to move to a splendid setting in Moraga Valley and become a national power in football. This is putting it in reverse. St. Mary's became a national power in football and moved to a splendid setting in the Moraga Valley. But now come hard times and strenuous competition. A half-back might be a devout believer in the Trinity but he found he could eat as well at Southern California or Pitt as at St. Mary's and the stadium which had been built with the bond money of gentlemen who were both believers in the faith and instinctive financiers began to break out in large brown patches which were discovered to be sections where paying spectators should rightly have been sitting. Things seem to have gone from bad to worse because the bankers are now asking for their money and the stadium will soon be theirs.

What the example of St. Mary's means to the rest of the college world is not clear, but there are bound to be tremors. There is the possibility that Pittsburgh, for example, will find its stadium lifted from under its guidance and turned over to the Mellon interests.

In the meantime, Mr. Jock Sutherland, the coach at Pitt, is under the necessity of turning out football teams which will fill the amphitheater for every home game. The strain on Mr. Sutherland is considerable, but it is probably no worse than the physical terrors which confront a coach in the Western Conference, where 27 coaches have lost their positions in the past ten years. There are only two—Noble Kizer at Purdue and Bob Zuppke at Illinois — who have stayed the ten-year period and the alumni wolves have been on Zuppke's trail for years.

Football continues as one of our great sports. Because the season is concentrated in a few months, the turmoil is tremendous. Because the rewards for victory are so great, the conniving, finagling and underground activity which goes on in recruiting players, seducing coaches and building up football winners is beyond comprehension. It is covered with a gleaming white mantle of sportsmanship and chastity. Beneath all the speeches about manhood, clean-cut vigor and courage, there flows a stream of corruption which taints everything concerned with the sport. Unless you know the coaches and the graduate managers and the scouts and the more prominent alumni, it will be impossible to understand how widespread the skulduggery is. There is nothing new about the matter and I'm not professing to uncover a scandal which will shock the athletic world. Football teams are either bought outright by the use of scholarships or easy jobs (the Ohio State case of recent memory with the football men enjoying so-called positions on the state payroll), or they are recruited through the efforts of wealthy alumni. After years of bad teams, Princeton hired Fritz Crisler and there immediately appeared on the campus, as by magic, a host of halfbacks and tackles of fine quality. After a series of bad years, Yale hired Mr. Greasy Neale and there was an instant change. After a record of defeats which made the defeat of Dr. Conant on the Teachers Oath Bill seem like the victory of the Austrians at Caporetto, Harvard enlisted the services of Mr. Dick Harlow, an eminent ornithologist and lateral-pass expert of Western Maryland. Mr. Harlow had hitherto been known as a gentleman of such magnetism that his departure for a new position resulted in a parade of broken-hearted ends and quarterbacks who insisted upon accompanying him to his new rest.

It has remained for the high schools, however, to conduct the sport on its higher planes. We quote the following dispatch from The New York Times:

> White Plains, N. Y., Oct. 19. Matthew Davidson, Tarrytown High School football coach, sought permission today to adopt Stephen Kazlo, 17-year-old quarterback, so that Kazlo would be

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immediately eligible to play football in Tarrytown.

Until last September this youth lived in Witherbee, N. Y., and rival schools have protested that he is not a bona-fide resident of Tarrytown and should not be allowed to play.

Supreme Court Justice Frederick P. Close informed counsel for Davidson that he was without jurisdiction, but that an adoption proceeding could be instituted in County Court or Surrogates' Court, which may be done.

This brings up possibilities of almost startling character, but it is hardly likely that Mr. Davidson's method will help St. Mary's of California. In that case it is obviously a problem concerning God, the bankers and Mr. Slip Madigan. Mr. Madigan has assembled a team, but something has gone wrong with his support—heavenly and otherwise. If there is an adoption necessary, it will be the adoption of St. Mary's college stadium and all, by the bankers. On the face of it, this is absurd. There is no need of the bankers taking over an American college; they have possession of them as it stands.

Current Art

LEGER. (Museum of Modern Art.) The familiar surfaces, patterns and colors of a contemporary Frenchman who is a genius at making everything look like twisted tin. If you've seen one you've seen them all.

EMILIO AMERO. (Florence Cane School of Art.) Showing what can be done on a lithograph stone. The color prints especially display the possibilities for mass reproduction of art.

CHILDE HASSAM. (Milch Galleries.) The late academician who painted American landscapes in big gold frames with the mannerisms but not the understanding of Claude Monet.

DELPHIC STUDIOS. An all-Mexican show dominated by the lithographs of Orozco.

POP HART. (Newark Museum, Newark, N. J.) A comprehensive memorial exhibition of an artist who preferred painting and drawing people to tea drinking at gallery openings. A great many of his prints show what might be an untouched side of proletarian art.

SPANISH. (Brooklyn Museum.) Greco, Valesquez and Goya. One of the most exciting shows on the list.

BELLOWS. (Keppel Galleries.) Powerful prizefight lithographs by a one-time contributor to The Masses. Their prices, ten years after his death, read like the Federal Treasury balance.

WHITNEY MUSEUM. Sculpture, paintings and prints for the opener. Worth seeing.

HY COHEN. (A.C.A. Gallery.) Fifty sketches, the results of a summer of painting by one of the younger watercolorists of the paint-what-you-see-in-the-country school.

Between Ourselves

JOSEPH NORTH, who wrote about Angelo Herndon's release from Atlanta Penitentiary last year, will cover the story of Herndon's return in next week's issue. As we go to press, Herndon is scheduled to start his journey to Atlanta Wednesday evening, October 23, following a great mass meeting at the Manhattan Opera House and a march to the train with the audience as a guard of honor. North is scheduled to make the trip South with Herndon and his attorneys.

While requests continue to come into our office for a reprint of Robert Forsythe's article, "The World Gone Mad" (NEW MASSES, September 24) workers in San Bernardino County, California, have already put it out, in mimeographed form. The matter of a large pamphlet edition of the article is under consideration.

Robert Bruce is an Ottawa newspaperman.

Fielding Burke's new novel, *A Stone Came Rolling,* will be published by Longmans Green & Co. on November 29.

James Waterman Wise is one of the editors of People's Press, a new national tabloid which will make its appearance next week.

The next quarterly issue of THE NEW MASSES will be dated December 17. It will be an anti-fascist number, with special material now being gathered by a committee headed by Robert Forsythe. Details concerning it will appear in this column as the work progresses. The aim is to include in this number contributions from a much broader list of writers and artists than we hitherto presented.

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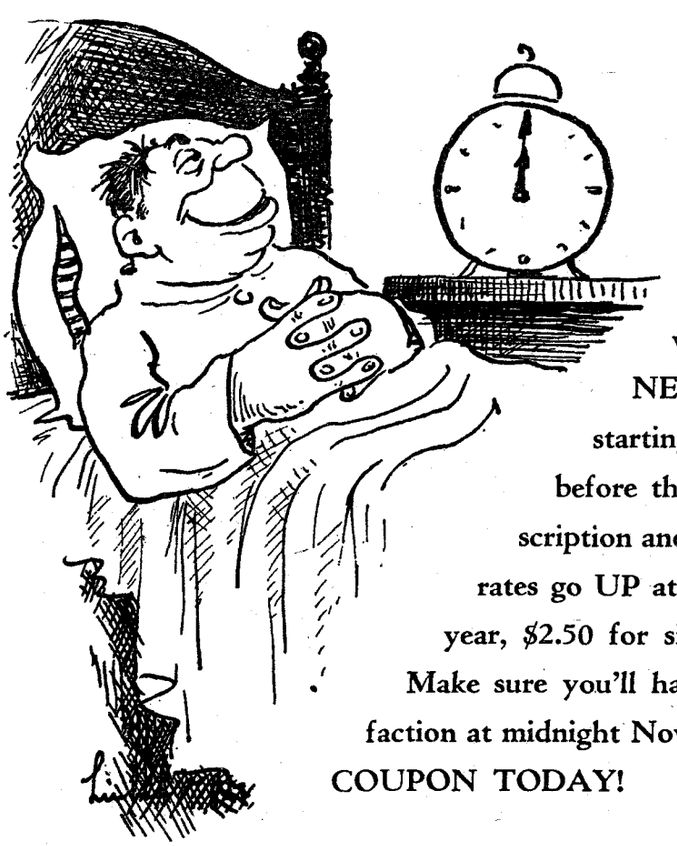

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CORRECTION

Due to a typographical error, not discovered until part of the issue was off the press, the price of a year's subscription appeared last week as $3 instead of $3.50, the regular price, which remains unchanged until midnight, Nov. 6.

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